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# The Hermeneutics of Peter Riedeman (1506-1556)

With Reference to I Cor. 5, 9-13 and II Cor. 6, 14-7, 1

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Theological Faculty  
of the University of Basel  
for  
the Degree of Doctor of Theology  
by  
Robert Charles Holland  
of  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Band V der Theologischen Dissertationen, herausgegeben  
von Bo Reicke

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herausgegeben von Bo Reicke

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Riedeman zitierte in seiner «Rechenschaft» (1541), dem Katechismus der Huterischen Täuferbewegung, die Bibel fast 3000mal. Professor Holland (in Kalifornien tätig) analysiert die Auslegung der zwei wichtigsten Paulusstellen, die das Verhältnis zwischen Christentum und Staatswesen beleuchten — ein heute ganz aktuelles Thema.
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Die Reihe wird fortgesetzt

FRIEDRICH REINHARDT VERLAG BASEL

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## INTRODUCTION

Peter Riedeman was an Anabaptist born in Hirschberg, Silesia in the year 1506. After conversion from Roman Catholicism to Anabaptism about 1527, he became an Anabaptist missionary working in Austria and Germany where in 1541, from prison he wrote the Grosse Rechenschaft. It is from this work that an investigation of his hermeneutics is made. It became the definitive document for the Hutterites and Riedeman served as their leader from 1542 until his death in 1556. Early prints have the spelling Ryedeman, but in modern literature he is referred to as Riedeman or Riedemann.

The Rechenschaft lends itself well to a hermeneutical investigation because of the large number of biblical references (almost 3000) which Riedeman cites in the Rechenschaft. Except for one dissertation in 1927 and a few journal articles, there is very little secondary literature on Riedeman. His thought is a relatively unbroken field in the continuing Anabaptist studies of this century.

This dissertation is an effort to indicate, explain and examine his basic presuppositions from the standpoint of his interpretation. It has not been my intention to engage solely in criticism, not to make Calvin (or myself) Riedeman's judge. If Riedeman is to have a judge, should it not be the one under whom we are all subject, the scriptures themselves.



## Events Leading to the Formation of the Anabaptist Movement

### The rise of sacramentarianism in the Netherlands and Germany

In order to see the position of Peter Riedeman as leader of the Hutterite movement and his chief theological work, the Rechenschaft, in the perspective of the Reformation, one must travel a geographical route beginning in the Netherlands with the activities of Wessel Gansfort (1420-1489) and Hinne Rode.<sup>1</sup> From this country came an idea and a movement which were to cause a significant deterioration of the redemptive significance of the Mass.<sup>2</sup> "The rise of sacramentarianism," the view that the sacraments were only a sign and that no change in the elements of the Mass or the person receiving them occurred, says George Williams, "is surely as important in an account of the Radical Reformation as the emergence of antipaedobaptism."<sup>3</sup> Sacramentarianism, in addition to its being involved in the changing view of the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, begins the list of other subjects which would soon undergo modification: justification, sanctification, the atonement and the nature of the church.<sup>4</sup>

Wessel Gansfort enters the picture at this point. His De sacramento eucharistiae is the first major link in the chain of development of symbolist theology.<sup>5</sup>

Sometime around the year 1517, a lawyer in the Hague named Cornelius Hoen was asked to evaluate the personal library which Gansfort had left at his death. In it he found the manuscript of De sacramento eucharistiae. After reading it (along with Erasmus and

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1. The dates of the birth and death of Hinne Rode are unknown.
  2. Williams, George H., The Radical Reformation, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1962, page 27.
  3. Ibid., page 29.
  4. Ibid., page 30.
  5. Ibid., page 31.

Luther), he came to reject transubstantiation, believing that the Last Supper was a meal indicating the promise of Christ to be with his followers. The repeatedly offered sacrifice appeared to him to be a commemorative supper. He also became convinced that Christ's giving himself for man has been accomplished once and for all on the cross. It was apparent to him that the continual sacrifice of the Mass was unnecessary.

As Hoen was now old and unable to make the journey to Wittenberg, Rode travelled there in 1521 and requested Luther's view of Hoen's interpretation of the Lord's Supper. The next year he journeyed to Oecolampadius in Basel, and in 1523-24 continued to Zürich where he presented Zwingli the "Epistola Honii." Therein, says the RGG, was "est" of the words of the Lord's Supper interpreted as "significat."<sup>6</sup>

While Luther was secluded in the Wartburg Castle in 1521, a colleague, Andreas (Bodenstein) Carlstadt, began to create trouble in Wittenberg; their difference of opinion came over the eucharist. By 1523, Luther had become very definite about his conviction that the real presence was a necessary part of Christian doctrine. Carlstadt, on the other hand, had become a sacramentarian, probably through the Gansfort material<sup>7</sup>, and was seen later as one of the most extreme of the Reformers. This matter and other ideas caused his banishment from Wittenberg in 1524.

The German Anabaptist and social radical Thomas Müntzer merits special consideration at this point. In some respects he is the bridge between the theological side of the development of Anabaptism and the social and political aspects. Born in 1490, he was important in Northern Germany because of his attack on (a) Luther, with whom he had met and disputed, (b) the scriptural principle, (c) infant baptism, (d) and his open revolt.<sup>8</sup> He also laid claim to the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. After expulsion from Zwickau, Bohemia, Alstedt, and Mühlhausen, he traveled to South Germany; there he was captured and executed for his involvement in the Peasant's Revolt of 1524-25. The aspirations of these people were an amalgam of social, economic, and evangelical concerns; to separate them would be very difficult.

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6. Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Bd. 5, Tübingen, Mohr (P. Siebeck) 1961, page 1135.

7. Williams, G. (N.2), page 39.

8. Oxford Dictionary of The Christian Church, Ed. F.L. Cross, Oxford, 1961, page 933.



George Williams calls the unsuccessful Peasants' Revolt a "civil war within the German empire,"<sup>9</sup> likening it to an upheaval in seventeenth century England. In Germany, however, it was not successful. An important result was the alienation of large numbers of the Lutherans, and the peasants from the Lutheran Reformation. After 1525, Lutheranism lost some of its character as a pan-German movement;<sup>10</sup> the likelihood of Anabaptism as a movement captivating the lower classes was greatly enhanced. It has even been suggested that the disillusionment of the Peasants' War was a factor in the growing Anabaptist movement to forever forsake political action and retreat into biblical idealism.

Sacramentarianism moves south to Switzerland.  
An idea becomes a movement; antipaedobaptism.

Sacramentarianism, even after its transfer from the Netherlands to North Germany, had only developed to the stage of a quarrel between Luther and Carlstadt; the next major event was its spread to the Swiss cantons. The major cities involved were Basel and Zürich.

Hinne Rode in 1522-23 was in Basel hoping to get the printer Cratander to publish the works of Gansfort. Oecolampadius encouraged him to go to Zürich and meet Zwingli.<sup>11</sup> Zwingli was immediately receptive to the thought and the Epistola of Hoen and a significant landmark was passed in the development of the Reformation thought on the Lord's Supper. In short, Carlstadt, Hoen, and Erasmus were agents in causing the whole Swiss Reformation movement to move to the sacramentarian position.<sup>12</sup>

In this way, an idea in the Netherlands became a source of controversy in Northern Germany, migrated south through the people it involved and having arrived in Southern Germany and Northern Switzerland was now destined to become a movement. It is not of course implied that the new view of the sacrament was the only factor involved in the development of Anabaptism. It is clear however, that it was one of the chief vehicles which propelled the Reformation in the Germanic part of Switzerland and in whose absence the otherwise prepared stage for the development of Anabaptism might have taken an entirely different course. It is certainly a track upon which we can trace the

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9. Williams, George (N. 2), page 82.

10. Ibid., page 82.

11. Ibid., page 88.

12. Ibid., page 85.

development of events in a connected series up to the formation of the Hutterites.

In relation to Luther, who was conservative in his view of the sacraments, the sacramentarianism of the Swiss would appear radical. From within both camps arose their own radicalism; Williams tells us that the radical form of Lutheranism was spiritualism, and the radical form of Zwinglianism was Anabaptism.<sup>13</sup>

At this point it is possible to show how the Anabaptists were derived from Zwingli, and proceed to the Hutterites. Zwingli's conservatism on the relationship of church and state was roughly comparable to Luther's conservatism on the eucharist. In bringing the Reformation to Zürich, he had no desire to move any faster than the laity could be brought along to accept the reform with theological maturity and political and social unity. There were in Zürich a small group of radicals who were not to be led in any direction other than where the New Testament would guide them. These were a group of students who had gathered around Zwingli; from these, Louis Haetzer, Felix Mantz, and Conrad Grebel were to be the founders of the Swiss Bretheren. At first they followed Zwingli with ardor. When it became apparent that Zwingli's reform in Zürich would be slow and in accord with the wishes of the City Council, these young scholars became vocal in their demands for (a) quicker and more thorough reform, (b) separation of church and state, (c) voluntary church membership, (d) adult baptism. Failing to obtain these, they formed a sect<sup>14</sup> and in January of 1525 an ex-priest, George Blau-rock, was baptized by the unordained Conrad Grebel. This was the first adult baptism of the Reformation and the pattern for all other adult baptisms since that day.

Persecution by Zwingli and the Reformed authorities was swifter than the slow moving reform; it was also extremely severe. It was so harsh that these young men had time only for brief missionary work before they died by execution or sickness.<sup>15</sup> As a result, a group

13. Ibid., page 86

14. "An enthusiast always begins by trying to form a church within the church, always ends by finding himself committed to sectarian opposition" (Knox, Ronald, Enthusiasm, London, Oxford, 1950, page 109).

An enthusiast is normally thought of one who places Spirit over Word. There is always an element of enthusiasm in the biblical literalist because for him, the authority behind his authoritative scripture is the Spirit which interprets it.

15. Grebel died of the plague, Mantz was executed, as

such as the Hutterites who enjoyed a few periods of comparative peace was able to leave behind a much larger body of literature. The attempt to exterminate the group only spread it faster through the Swiss and Austrian valleys and Southern Germany.

### The Hutterites

Depending on the severity of persecution, Anabaptists in Switzerland, Austria, and Southern Germany either remained in the places where they had been converted, were executed, or fled to what they hoped would be a safer place to live. Some travelled west to Strassbourg; the Anabaptists of the Tirolese Alps in Austria were persecuted to the point of extermination, and those who could travelled to Moravia. The decade of the 1520's was a period of the extension of Anabaptism throughout the Habsburg empire; Tirol, Austria, Carinthia, and other territories. From Zürich, George Blaurock spread the message of his faith all along the Inn valley till his death in 1529. Stakes burned regularly along the Inn valley.<sup>16</sup>

Jacob Hutter became the leader of the group in 1533. He originated from an Anabaptist group in the Tirol which had been founded by Blaurock. This Austrian part of the Anabaptist movement was distinct from the rest by its practice of the community of goods, which was first begun in Moravia in 1529.

In comparison with other Anabaptist groups, the Hutterites were able to live in relative political and religious peace in Moravia. A communal and family life became possible because of the absence of persecution in the Slavic surrounding. Because of their isolation, they developed a strong sense of their own identity and history. They were able to set down their teachings and history, and thus became one of the better known Anabaptist groups.<sup>17</sup>

The early groups lived in less than brotherly harmony. Periodic differences over leadership and type of community life cast a shadow over these first years in Moravia.

In 1533 the non-resistant Anabaptists of Moravia broke into three groups:

- a. those who accepted Hutter's leadership became

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was Haetzer.

16. Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. II, Scotdale, Pa., USA, Mennonite Publishing House, 1959, page 854.

17. Ibid.

- Hutterite Brethren
- b. the Philippites, led by Philip Plener, who left Moravia and, after heavy persecution, re-emerged with the Hutterites due to the work of Riedeman.
  - c. the Gabrielites (from Gabriel Ascherham) who moved back to Silesia, but whom poor leadership caused to rejoin the Hutterites between 1542-45.<sup>18</sup>

Through a long line of outstanding leaders, they banded together to survive good and bad times; Ulrich Stadler of Tirol, Hans Amon of Bavaria, Peter Riedeman of Silesia, Peter Walpot of Tirol, Klaus Braidl of Hesse.

### Peter Riedeman

Peter Riedeman was born in Hirschberg, Silesia, in the year 1506,<sup>19</sup> and learned the trade of shoemaker. Unfortunately, we have no knowledge of his spiritual teachers or his study of religious writings. In the year of Riedeman's birth, Zwingli received his M.A. from the University of Basel; three years later, in 1509, Calvin was born in France; eight years after Riedeman was born, in 1514, Conrad Grebel, founder of the Swiss Bretheren, would enter Basel University. The next fifty years would see the lives and work of these men significantly related.

We do not hear of Riedeman again until after he had joined the Anabaptist Bretheren in Upper Austria, where Hans Hut and later Wolfgang Brandhuber had been active as missionaries around the cities of Linz, Steyer, and Gmünden in the years 1527-1529.<sup>20</sup> Riedeman was elected Servant of the Word (Diener des Wortes) in 1529 meaning he was considered qualified to be sent on missionary work outside the Hutterite community.<sup>21</sup>

The Austrian town of Gmünden is significant for the understanding of his work. Its name is incorporated in his first doctrinal work called Rechenschaft unseres Glaubens geschrieben zu Gmünden in Land ob der Enns in Gefencknus, 1529-32. For his energetic and

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18. Ibid.

19. Mennonite Encyclopedia. (N. 16), vol. IV. Article: "Peter Riedeman" (Riedeman, Rydemann, Ryedeman.) I have chosen the spelling Riedeman because of simplicity.

20. Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. IV, (N.16) page 326.

21. Friedmann, Robert; Mais, Adolf, Die Schriften der Huterischen Taufergemeinschaften, 1529-1667. Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 1965, page 123.

zealous missionary work, he would spend a total of nine years in prison. The first of these periods corresponded to the date of the first Rechenschaft, 1529-32.

After escaping from Gmünd in 1532, he worked with the Bretheren in Linz but soon after joined the Hutterite Bretheren in Moravia. From Moravia he was sent to Franconia on a missionary journey. Almost immediately he was put in prison in Nürnberg, remaining there from 1533-1537. During this time Calvin's Institutes were first published in Basel, and Calvin began his first attempt to serve the church in Geneva.

Upon release from prison in Nürnberg in 1537, Riedeman rejoined the Moravian Hutterites. During his absence, divisions had occurred. He attempted, with some success, to unite the factions.

Letters appealing for help from Anabaptists in the state of Hesse caused him to be sent there in the year 1539. Calvin was in "exile" in Strassbourg at this time. Riedeman's visit was of brief duration and he returned to Steinbrunn, Austria. In only two months time, at the beginning of 1540, he was again sent to Hesse. This journey met with ill luck, and in February 1540, he was put in prison in Marburg. He received good treatment from his jailers however, and was transferred to nearby Wolkersdorf castle.<sup>22</sup> Here, he records in the "dry summer of 1540,"<sup>23</sup> the second or Grosse Rechenschaft was begun. This is the work examined in this dissertation. Riedeman got the idea for the work when he thought it would be useful to inform Philip of Hesse about the true Anabaptist doctrine. (See no. 9 in list of similarities on page 12.)

The year 1541 found Calvin recalled from Strassbourg to Geneva to remain there the rest of his life. Riedeman continued writing the Rechenschaft.<sup>24</sup> and was<sup>25</sup> released from prison in 1542. He returned to Moravia and was elected an elder of the Hutterite church. From 1542 to his natural death in December 1556 on a Bruderhof in Protzko, Slovakia, he was the acknowledged leader of the Moravian Hutterites. About this time (1556) Calvin was able to gain the edge over his opponents in Geneva and would enter the last decade of his life.

#### Similarities between the Rechenschaft and the Institutes of the Christian Religion

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22. Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. IV (N.16), page 327.
  23. "Im dörren Sommer des 40 Jahrs Riedeman in Hessen gefangen gelegen; da hat er unser gedruckte Rechenschaft schriftlich gestellt." Wolkan, Rudolf, Das grosse Gemeinde-Geschichtbuch, Wien, 1923, marginal note, page 167

1. Calvin's Institutes and Riedeman's Rechenschaft appeared within four or five years of each other. The Institutes first appeared in Basel in March 1536 from the press of Thomas Platter and Balthasar Lasius.<sup>26</sup> The Rechenschaft was printed privately in 1540 or 1541 by the Hutterites in Moravia through Phillips Volland, and unknown wandering printer.<sup>27</sup>

2. Both the Institutes and the Rechenschaft were written for a specific group of people as a "handbook" and guide to faith and practical Christian living and to correct error. A third document also had this characteristic; the Augsburg Confession of 1530.

3. Both are organized around the Apostle's Creed.

4. Both use a large amount of scripture. In the case of the Rechenschaft, it has almost three thousand biblical references in 247 pages.

5. Both authors were leaders of "movements" - Riedeman 1542-56, Calvin 1536-38 and 1541-64.

6. Both leaders were deeply concerned with the problem of the church and strove to free it from outside control.

7. Both the Institutes and the Rechenschaft aim at being theological and practical.

8. Both works exercised a decisive influence within the groups to whom written and continue to do so to the present.

9. The goal of both works was not only to teach their readers, but to defend them against the rulers who might misunderstand the Christians who were among their subjects. J.T. McNeill in his History and Character of Calvinism says the teaching and apologetical aims went together. "If Calvin spoke for the French Protestants, he also spoke to them..." (page 124). We see the counterpart of this in the following statement about the Rechenschaft :

24. The assumption was that he was at this time working on the Rechenschaft because his correspondence decreased. (ME IV, page 327).

25. Williams (N.2) page 671, says Riedeman reluctantly violated the lenient terms of his imprisonment and escaped because the Hutterites in Moravia needed him.

26. Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion tr. F.T. Battles, vol. I, Library of Christian Classics; Philadelphia, Westminster, 1960, page xxxiii, Introduction.

27. Friedmann-Mais (N.21), page 124.

"In the Chronicles of the Hutterian Church there are references to a printed confession of faith sent to the nobility of Moravia in 1545..."

### Rechenschaft, Appendix

#### Text of the Rechenschaft

It has been thought for a long time that the British Museum copy of the Rechenschaft which bears the number 3908a8 and the date 1565 was the oldest extant. In the MQR 36:1962, pages 169-170, J. Doornkaat Koolman reports the discovery in the Zentralbibliothek, Zürich, of an edition from the first printing of the Rechenschaft in 1545, and his evidence is convincing. Several other old copies are:

- a. Zentralbibliothek, Zürich, date 1565 ("Zweiter Druck")
- b. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, 1565
- c. British Museum, London. It would appear then that the Zürich and Wien (Vienna) copy are on a par with the British Museum copy for age.
- d. University Library, Chicago, n.d.
- e. In a Brüderhof (Colony) in Montana, USA.
- f. Landesmuseum, Brünn (Brno), Czechoslovakia.
- g. Breslau Universitätsbibliothek (it is not certain here because of the war). n.d.



## CHAPTER TWO

Study of I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1

Two passages from the New Testament, I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1, which deal specifically with the substance of separatism, were used extensively by Riedeman in his development of that theme.<sup>1</sup> For him, it involved an action in two spheres; first, the Christian is to be separated as far as possible from the world and its responsibilities. Secondly, he is to separate himself from other Christians if certain doctrines and actions of theirs do not agree with his.

The purpose here is to present an explanation of these two Corinthian passages, using the best available modern New Testament scholarship. It is hoped that a meaning will emerge which is as close as possible to the intention of the author, Paul.

There are certain features in both passages that pose problems, especially when they are considered together. If one reads II Cor. 6:14-7:1, remembering that I Cor. 5:9 mentions a "previous letter," several possibilities appear.

1. Because the II Cor. text appears too abruptly in its surrounding passages and is different in subject and tone, it is possible for one to conclude that it is (a) part of some other letter, (b) a fragment of the one mentioned in I Cor. 5:9, or (c) that Paul is not the author.

2. If II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is removed from the verses around it, 6:13 and 7:2 fit together with no problem.

3. The presence of several hapax legomena suggest to some the likelihood of non-Pauline authorship.

The work before us then is to arrive at the meaning of these two passages and solve these problems, if an answer can be found.

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1. I Cor. 5 is used five times; II Cor. 6 passage is used twenty-five times. See page 48 of chapter three for the complete list.

Translation<sup>2</sup>I Corinthians 5:9-13

(9) I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral men; (10) not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolators, since then you would need to go out of the world. (11) But rather I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolator, reviler, drunkard, or robber - not even to eat with such a one. (12) For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? (13) God judges those outside. Drive out the wicked person from among you.

II Corinthians 6:14-7:1

(14) Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (16) What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

"I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, (18) and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

(7:1) Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

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2. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Summary Of Relationships Between Christians And The  
World

I Corinthians 5:9-13

Associate with these:

1. Immoral

Why? To proclaim the  
Gospel.

2. Greedy

of the World

3. Robbers

4. Idolators

Do not associate  
intimately with these:  
(do not even eat with  
them)

1. Immoral

2. Greedy

3. Idolator

if such is a  
Christian  
brother

4. Reviler

5. Robber

Why? For the  
sake of dis-  
cipline.

II Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Do not:  
(be or have)

Do:

Mismatched

Partnership

Come out

Fellowship

Be separate

Accord

Touch not the unclean thing

What in Common?

Agreement

In relation to:

Iniquity

Darkness

Unbelievers

Idols

I Corinthians 5:9-13

Égrapsa hymin én taê épistolae

The fixing of the limits against heathenism was a perpetually new problem for the church and the Apostle Paul. S.M. Gilmour reminds us that Graeco-Roman paganism had not established the connection between religion and morality<sup>3</sup> and some of Paul's converts had to spend a great deal of time learning this.

Paul has not made an earlier reference to another letter before this remark; the letter he now refers to in v.9 is called by scholars the "Previous Letter," meaning that it was written prior to the I Corinthians of our present canon. It has been lost; several modern New Testament scholars believe that a part of it has been discovered in II Cor. 6:14-7:1.<sup>4</sup> Against these, J. Hering states that this is only a "supposition."<sup>5</sup> Whether or not II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is a part of the "Previous letter," it is significant that the passage with which we are now dealing, I Cor. 5:9-13, offers a very adequate explanation of it. If one puts the passages alongside each other, apart from the question of the "Previous Letter," it is easy to see that II Cor. 6:14-7:1 with its subject material and slightly disjointed position in chapters six and seven would meet the qualifications to be part of the "Previous Letter."

Many scholars suggest that there had been a deliberate misinterpretation on the part of the Corinthians in order to turn attention away from their own behavior or simply to complain about something else.<sup>6</sup> It could also be that the Corinthians were saying that Paul had made a ridiculous charge against them.

The possibility that égrapsa is an epistolary aorist is frequently raised but denied by most commentators and could not be the case here since Paul has

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3. Gilmour, S.M. "Second Corinthians," The Interpreter's Bible Dictionary, G. Buttrick, ed., vol. I, NY, Abingdon, 1962, page 698. For additional information on the moral climate in Greece, see note 29.
  4. Allo, Grossan, Hurd, Plummer, Wendland, Windisch among others.
  5. Hering, Jean, La Seconde Épître de Saint Paul aux

not given any previous directions about keeping company with fornicators. Robertson and Plummer feel that Paul is making reference to an earlier letter because "a summons to expel a member who has contracted an incestuous union cannot be regarded as a charge not to associate with fornicators."<sup>7</sup>

maë synanamignysthai pornois

means literally, "not to mix yourselves up together with."<sup>8</sup> Bauer (AG) gives "mix up together, mingle, or associate with."<sup>9</sup> The particular combination of prepositions occurs in a similar way in Hosea 7:8, and in II Thess. 3:14. See also Ezekiel 20:18. A good translation would be, "do not associate intimately with." The word intimately is implied and necessary because of what Paul says in v.10. There he qualifies the phrase "Not at all meaning the immoral of this world..." and explains v. 9. The separation to be effected is certainly not a monastic flight from society. This is clear because (a) only a limited group of people are specified when Paul says "do not associate with (them)," and (b) he explains the type of separation desired. In v. 10b Paul makes clear that cutting oneself off from society is not his intention. It is separation with reference to a specific group and in a certain way; it is one of degree and type (cf. next verse).

ou pantoos

"Not altogether," (v. 10) which means the same as "not in all circumstances."<sup>10</sup> Without a proper understanding of these two words, it is possible to completely

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- Corinthiens. (Commentaire du Nouveau Testament, vol. VIII) Delachaux et Niestle, Neuchatel, 1958, page 41, tr. by M. Wardle.
6. Hurd, J.C., The Origin of I Corinthians, London, SPCK, 1965, pages 151-52.
  7. Robertson, A., & Plummer, A., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians., second ed., Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1914, page 13.
  8. Ibid., page 105.
  9. Arndt, W.F. & Gingrich, F.W., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, tr. by Arndt & Gingrich from W. Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch, fourth ed., 1949-52, Chicago, 1957, p.792.
  10. Robertson & Plummer, (N. 7), page 105.

misinterpret Paul's meaning. This is the pivot point in understanding the passage. The clarification of the whole problem concerning the relationship of the Christian to his fellow Christian and to non-believers is explained in this qualifying phrase. The ban on social intercourse is explained; one is to associate in his daily activities with whomever Providence brings across his path (cf. page 16 ).

It was unfortunate that Paul seemed to have been taken so literally by the Corinthians. If the idea of total separation from society were meant here, it would be entirely inconsistent with the rest of Paul's writings, and of Jesus' statements in the Gospels. The "not at all..." makes it quite clear that there are some people of undesirable and even dangerous character with whom the Christian must rub shoulders daily. To understand complete separation from society as God's will for the church in Corinth would create a situation as difficult as the first, and one that would be impossible of fulfilment. Hering reminds us that this verse sanctions normal commercial and social intercourse with pagans. There would be church members who worked as laborers or even slaves in the homes and businesses of pagans.<sup>11</sup> It seems that the word "world" is to be understood as the inhabited world, and not in the religious sense.

The bonds of family, friends and occupation were ones which should not be completely broken. They would in most cases not fit into the specific list of Christian offenders Paul names here. The association with masters and overseers and the usual schedule of daily activities for the Christian in Corinth is one thing; to partake of the Lord's Supper with these same people is quite another. It is certainly true that Paul would be concerned about the erosion of character through evil companionship. The matter of the community meal, the "Tischgemeinschaft," goes to the heart of the very existence of the Church. Let this be spotted by the continual presence of notorious offenders, and both the outward witness and inner stability of the Church are threatened. Separation under the conditions Paul sets forth here is for no lower goal than to enhance the mission of the Church and provide for its continued existence. The Church must arrive at a satisfactory answer to this question: "how far is the Christian to be 'in' the world, and how far 'out' of it ? Expressed in another form, "how far does the natural order of the world lay claim to the new being in Christ ?" This question is so important that an adequate answer to it will cover most of the ethical

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11. Hering, (N. 5) page 41.

questions raised in the life of the Church as a community and its members individually. It is the underlying question for this whole dissertation.

εάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος ἀεὶ πόρνος

The list of sins<sup>12</sup> (Lasterkatalog) is not complete; one should guard against the possibility of thinking that a brother is to be avoided if he is guilty of only these sins.<sup>13</sup> In Rom. 1:26-32 and Col. 3:5-10 are seen instances where Paul calls attention to the sin of intention. At this point, though, he means the acts of men.

The word πόρνος is a very broad word, not meaning any specific sexual sin, but anything in that area. In Corinth sexual sins were rampant and would inevitably exert some influence on the Church. Jesus emphasizes greed more than Paul, yet it appears in all of Paul's lists.<sup>14</sup> For Paul's views on idolatry, see chapt. 10. Reference to "reviler" is an interesting matter, and may have a connection with 4:12. Admonitions not to be intemperate with alcohol occur frequently in Paul (Rom. 13:13; I Thess. 5:7).<sup>15</sup>

τί γάρ μοι τοὺς ἐξ ὑο κρίνειν;

At the end of chapter 5 (vv. 12-13) Christians are instructed not to judge the world and to exercise a judgement within the congregation. The verses which directly follow (6:1-2) appear to present a contradiction or at least a problem in that they seem to contradict 5:11-12. Moreover we have the command of Christ himself in Matt. 7:1-5, "judge not that ye be not judged." Investigation shows three types of judgement and separate situations are involved here (a) Paul at the end of Chapter five is instructing the congregation in Corinth to exercise a discipline within the church that it may be kept pure; because the

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12. The use of a catalog of vices for moral instruction started with popular philosophy and came into Hellenistic Judaism. There are none in rabbinical literature; they are, however, common in Philo and wisdom of Solomon and IV Maccabees. The Interpreter's Bible, G.A. Buttrick, ed., vol. 10; NY, Abingdon, 1953, page 67.
  13. Other lists are found in 6:9,10; Gal.5:19ff, Rom. 13:13, II Cor. 12:20, Col. 3:8; cf. Eph. 4:31, I Tim. 1:9,10, II Tim. 3:2-5.
  14. Interpreter's Bible (N.12), page 67.
  15. Ibid.



present moral situation at Corinth is so pressing they are not to bother with judging the outside world. Secondly, Paul tells them that while they are a congregation in Corinth, God will evaluate the behaviour of the outsiders. With this, we see that there is actually a connected train of thought into chapter six. At the end of chapter five, they are not to judge the outside. (b) In chapter six if the outside world forces an injustice upon them, it would be better not to go to court because their day of justice will come (v.2) in the final judgement when, as promised here, they will at that time exercise their rights of judgement. Until that time their rights are held in abeyance. (c) The judgment Jesus warns against in Matt.7 is the carping persistent fault-finding between one person and another.

## II Corinthians 6:14-7:1

The passage now under consideration, II Cor. 6:14-7:1, has been described as an energetic warning to avoid heathenism. Along with this, the call to reconciliation, described earlier in 5:18-21, is at the same time a challenge to final separation from unbelief.

The operative word in the first phrase, (v.14a) "do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers," is heterozygountes. By using the picture of a yoke Paul warns the Corinthians to avoid and deny entrance to any essentially foreign connection because, being under idols,<sup>16</sup> in reality it will be a false fellowship and and likewise a false service. Compare this with the picture of an easy yoke and a light burden in Matt. 11:29,30 in the promise of Jesus to his followers. With pres. part. heterozygountes the first of several hapax legomena is encountered. Arndt and Gingrich give the meaning as "to be unevenly yoked, be mismated with some one."<sup>17</sup> Reference is made to draft animals that need different kinds of yokes because they are of different species. E.B. Allo says the generic meaning of the word is "to fit together badly."<sup>18</sup> Windisch's description is even more revealing: " (to be) on a yoke which is neither right nor natural, pulling with an animal of another kind."<sup>19</sup>

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16. Wendland, Heinz-Dietrich, Die Briefe an die Korinther (Das Neue Testament Deutsch, hg. von Paul Althaus und Gerhard Friedrich, 7. Abt., 8. Aufl.), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962, page 187.
  17. Arndt & Gingrich (N. 9), page 315.
  18. Allo, E.B., Saint Paul: Second Epître aux Corinthiens

Heterozygountes has been modeled upon the adjective heterozygos of Lev. 19:19<sup>20</sup> and Deut. 22:10, the tenor of which - "you shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind," and "you shall not plough with an ox and an ass together" - forbids collaboration with infidels. The question commonly raised at this point is: "Does this infer that mixed marriages are not allowed?"<sup>21</sup> Yes, but the prohibition is general in its significance due to the absence of more precise details. Calvin's explanation at this point is clear and adequate; he feels that many interpreters believe Paul to be referring to marriage, but he (Calvin) would restrict it more generally, understanding the main idea to be a prohibition against "fellowship with them in their pollutions."<sup>22</sup> He goes on to speak of a yoke of ungodliness which Christians in their actions cannot share. Marriage, he believes would fall into this category. To marry an unbeliever, says Calvin would expose the believer intimately with idolatry, and thus we see a prohibition against marrying the ungodly.

The structure of verses 14b-16a:

tis gar	metochae	dikaio <sup>syn</sup> ae kai	anomia
ae tis	koinonia	phooti	pros skotos
tis de	symp <sup>ho</sup> onaesis	Christou	pros Beli <sup>ar</sup>
ae tis	meris	pisto <sup>o</sup>	meta apistu
tis de	syn <sup>kat</sup> athesis	na <sup>o</sup> Theou	meta eido <sup>o</sup> loon

Once the form is discovered, vv. 14b-16a fall into an obvious and convenient order. After the first

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- iens, "Etudes Bibliques," Paris, Gabalda, 1937, page 184, tr. by M. Wardle.
19. Windisch, Hans Ludwig, Der Zweite Korintherbrief, (Kritischer-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, begr. 'Meyer', 6. Abt., 9 Aufl.), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924, page 212.
  20. Grossouw, W., "Over de echtheid van 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1," Studia Catholica (Nijmegen), 26 (1951), tr. by A. Nieuwenheissen, pages 203-206.
  21. Hering (N.5), page 58.
  22. Calvin, John, The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, tr. T.A. Smail, Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd, 1964, pages 90-91.

recommendation, "do not be mismated," (v.14a), the ban is transferred to moral and theoretical truths, which are more general.<sup>23</sup> The complete absurdity of any kind of valid relationship between Christians and Pagans is thrust upon the reader by five aggressive and tightly constructed questions, each of which has a contrast between godliness and ungodliness. Because of the depth of the contrast, the words used, and their profound meaning, this section cannot be regarded as a hasty and superficial utterance. Plummer remarks that the great variety of expression is studied (calculated) and effective. He regards it as an illustration of the Apostle's rhetorical power.<sup>24</sup>

The table on page 27 indicates that the five words metochae, koinonia, symphoonaesis, meris, synkathesis, are used around the general idea of fellowship. The completion of the thought in each of the five phrases is obtained by the use of five pairs of words which are diametrically opposed to each other, each indicating the non-admissibility (unstatthaftigkeit) and impossibility of such a koinonia, anomoioon.<sup>25</sup> The last pair of words naoo Theou meta eidooloon provides the conclusion to the previous four. The four questions, with the fifth as summary, becomes the justification and explanation of the command which follows in verse 17: "therefore come out from them, and be separate from them."<sup>26</sup> Verse 17 then becomes the ethical conclusion of the previous statements.

#### Verses 14b-16a (part "A")

The problems in the Corinthian church came as a direct result of enthusiasm<sup>27</sup> and their gnostic misunderstanding of the nature of freedom in Christ.<sup>28</sup> The secularization of this local congregation was caused by its turning Christ-given freedom into a freedom to practice unchastity. There existed there:

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23. Héring, (N.5), page 50.
  24. Plummer, A., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, second ed., Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1915, page 207.
  25. Windisch, (N.19), page 213.
  26. Plummer, (N. 24), page 207
  27. An example would be the enthusiasm of the children of Israel at the foot of Mt. Sinai. In I Cor 10:7 "the people sat down to drink and rose up to dance." The same verse also accuses them of idolatry for this act, a charge that Paul levels against the Corinthians. The lack of discipline

- (a) a case of incest, I Cor. 5:1.
- (b) a case of lawlessness involving eating and prostitution.<sup>29</sup>
- (c) the sin against the precept of brotherly love, I Cor. 8:7.
- (d) a blurring of the contrast between Christ and idols, I Cor. 10:14,21.
- (e) Christians were going to heathen courts of law to settle legal matters, I Cor. 6:12.

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in the use of tongues would also fit into the category of enthusiasm (B. Reicke).

28. Wendland (N. 16), page 187.

29. "The moral atmosphere of Greece in that age was particularly conducive to immorality; in most of the nations prostitutes have figured as Pariahs; in Greece, they were an aristocracy, exercising a palpable influence over the national policy and social life, and mingling conspicuously in the great march of Greek intellect. No less than eleven authors of repute have used their talents as historiographers of the courtesans at Athens. Their works have not reached us entire, having fallen victim to the chaste scruples of the clergy of the Middle Ages. Enough remains, however, in the quotations of Athenaeus, Alciphron's letters Lucian, Diogenes, Laertius, Aristophanes, Aristaeus and others...(to give a clear picture). If moral looseness was 'aristocratic' in its form at Athens, it was somewhat less at Sparta and Corinth. Aristotle (Politics, ii 7) affirms positively that Spartan women openly committed the greatest acts of debauchery. From this then, it may be inferred that professional prostitutes were unnecessary at Sparta until a later period in history.

It was lawful in some Greek cities for courtesans to wear light, transparent garments; but at Sparta as may be imagined, the reverse was the rule, semi-nudity being the badge of virtuous women. (The source given for these is Athenaeus, xiii 20 c sed.; Suidas, Lex., Vo, Diagramma; Aeschylus c. Timarch, p. 134; St. Clement of Alexandria, Paedag. ii 10; Becker, Charicles, i 126). Into the arts practiced by the Corinthian Academy of Prostitution, (sic) it was not possible for even the Greeks to describe except by inventing new verbs. These Corinthian women regularly sneered at the 'sophistication' of their Athenian sister prostitutes." Sanger, William, M.D., A History of Prostitution, NY, Medical Publication

Because of the nature of these transgressions, the call to reconciliation is at the same time the insistence upon a final separation from unbelief. Whoever has become righteous (5:21) can have nothing to do with unrighteousness.<sup>30</sup>

In giving the main reason for the existence of the problem, Paul lays the blame on a relaxation of Christian standards, caused by their too-trusting contact with paganism. The result is that the infection of indifference began to weaken the fiber of the Corinthian church. This occurred in a very subtle manner:

"compromises, incidentally half-subconscious and voluntary which the church had made with the customs of the (surrounding) Gentiles, which brought about a gradual estrangement of the sons with their spiritual father."<sup>31</sup>

Paul's solution to the problem lay not so much in getting the congregation to expel its very liberal element as in making the group perceive: (1) that as Christians they were very unchristian in conduct, (2) that as believers, they were the Temple of God, and (3) that they ought therefore to choose righteousness, light, and Christ in place of their antitheses. To ignore or erase the gulf between Christians and pagans is to introduce an illegitimate structure to life; a structure which is not only wrong, but which is a shadow of reality compared to that which Christ offers his own.

The final part of the solution is Paul's recommendation in I Cor. 5:9-11 that Christians should be sociable, but he insists that they cannot go as far as fusion of habits and customs without encountering real disaster.<sup>32</sup>

#### Verses 14b-16a (part "B")

metochae is the first of five synonyms meaning "in common," and is used in the five questions in this section. Its particular form is a hapax legomenon, but metechein is found in I Cor. five times and three times in Hebrews.<sup>33</sup> With the exception of Ps. 121 and Song of Solomon 14:16, it does not appear elsewhere. The translation is given as "sharing, participation," in AG,<sup>34</sup> but in quoting verse 14b, the authors render

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Company, 1898, pages 45, 63.

30. Wendland (N. 16), page 187.

31. Allo (N. 18), page 183.

32. Ibid., page 186.

33. Ibid., page 185.

it "in common." Though three of the five synonyms are hapax legomena and all five are very specific words, an interchange would cause no difficulty in understanding the passage.

For the Jew, anomia was the essence of heathenism because the heathens live on the other side of the revelation of the will of God in the Law, which Israel is given.<sup>35</sup> koinōnia as used here means, like metochaē, "in common." It is only one of the five synonyms which appears frequently in Paul's writings.<sup>36</sup>

symphoonein, the root of symphōnaesis, means "to fit (in) with, match (with), agree with, to fit together," hence the translation "accord." <sup>37</sup> Hering's comment adds new depth and relevance; symphōnaesis = agreement, here it is equivalent to syncretism between Christian and pagan worship.<sup>38</sup> Syncretism is at the very heart of the problem Paul is trying to eradicate and against which all five questions are directed. It is the framework behind the five contrasts.

The last two terms in the first pair of questions are abstract and in the second pair are concrete. It should be noted that the antithesis in the third question, i.e., Christ and Belial (Beliar), involves more than two opposing moral standards or philosophies; personality, the highest category, has become involved. These personalities are no less than the Lords of the two kingdoms of Light and Darkness!

An explanation of Christou prōs Beliar involves four names: Christ, Belial, Satan and Antichrist. A summary of the evolution of the name "Satan" will show its connection with Belial and Paul's meaning. T.H. Gaster in his article "Satan"<sup>39</sup> tell us that Satan is not presented by the Old Testament as a particular demonic figure and it is only with the advent of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha that the concept of Satan as a clear personality emerges. The Being who is responsible for all evil does not always have the label Satan

34. Arndt & Gingrich (N.9), page 516.

35. Wendland (N.16), page 187.

36. Windisch (N.19), page 214.

The change from metochaē to koinōnia is of no particular significance, and is used for the sake of variety of expression. Plummer (N.24), page 207, feels that we should not attribute a meaning that met. means each partner has his share, and that on the other hand koin. implies that each member enjoys the whole.

37. Arndt & Gingrich (N.9), page 788.

38. Hering (N.5), page 58.

39. Gaster, T.H., "Satan," IBD, vol. IV, (N.3) pp.224-7.

(gk. ho diábolos). The more common name as he comes forth is Belial, the worthless one. This is descriptive of the results of his actions rather than his attitude. Satan as an evil, malignant enemy is most highly developed in the New Testament. He is presented as the Prince of Darkness and the continuing enemy of Light and God (cf. Acts 26:18).

Thus, it seems that by the term "Belial," Paul means the Lord of the kingdom of darkness, the enemy of light, the active protector and energizer of evil.<sup>40</sup>

aè tis meris pistoō metà apistōu

meris is the fourth word used as the connective "in common." More specifically, it means "share" or "portion"<sup>41</sup> and suggests that there is a "whole" to be shared (Acts 8:21).<sup>42</sup> The first two pairs of contrasts (righteousness-lawlessness, light-darkness) were abstract ideas; then followed the rival world rulers Cristoū and Beliar. The fourth pair of subjects in the catalogue are the two classes of men for which the two rulers compete: pistoō and apistōu.

synkatathesis means: (a) approval, assent, (B) agreement, union and referring to a "decision arrived at by a group."<sup>43</sup> It is the fifth hapax legomenon in respect to biblical literature, but it is a Stoic technical term used in the legal sense in the papyrii.<sup>44</sup>

These synonymous ideas reinforce the thesis that "between faith and unbelief, neither a relationship of natures nor a community of interests can take place."<sup>45</sup> The fifth and final question stands by itself, having no other question as compliment.

Paul's absence has been a relatively long one and

40. Whether or not there exists an identity between Belial and Antichrist is also a problem. Antichrist is a definite person, but the probability of a reference to him in this passage meets with divided opinion among scholars. Allo and Bousset say that Belial is equivalent to Antichrist. Herin makes no commitment on the matter. Wendland, Grossouw and Arndt and Gingrich say that "perhaps" or "it is possible" that Belial and Antichrist are identified. Fitzmeyer flatly dismisses the identity of the two, and Windisch says, "II Thess. 2:3 does suggest a comparison" but that he must reject it.

41. Arndt & Gingrich (N. 9), page 506.

42. Plummer (N. 24), page 208.

43. Arndt & Gingrich (N. 9), page 781.

44. Allo (N.18), pages 187-88).

45. Windisch (N. 19), page 214.



the ability of the Christians to counteract the influences of the unhealthy environment had been tested. The dangers of 're-paganizing'<sup>46</sup> must have been ever present. The contrasts in the five questions all have this in common, that they give the Corinthians two directions from which to choose. In the kingdom of righteousness and light, Christ is Lord. The rival Belial is lord of the dominion of darkness and lawlessness. Between this chasm is the cosmos, no symphoonaesis is possible. The believer can belong in only one of them.<sup>47</sup> The problems of a specific church member are set forth:

Either man believes on Christ or on the heathen gods. Christian faith is a renunciation of the gods (cf. I Cor. 10:20f, 8:4ff). This is an enormous demand when man thinks heathenism a business form of religion, which is not only something in the national cult of antiquity, but includes the whole weekday of social life in the cultic arrangement and conduct. Whoever renounced the gods was an enemy of the nation, an anti-social person. The Christian faith of the early church distinguished itself from the many cults of the then heathen world in that it upheld an independent claim to truth which excluded all else and did not tolerate each cult with another,<sup>48</sup> i.e. one could belong to several mystery religions. But between Christ and the other gods, there was no settlement, no equalization with other divinities, which the syncretism of the time so much liked to practice, as the worship of the oriental deities gained ground toward the West.<sup>49</sup>

Verses 16b - 17.

haemeîs gàr naòs Theoû esmen zoôntos.

From Ez. 37:27, Ex. 29:45, Lev. 26:12 and Jer. 31:1 come the ideas for 16b. In Acts 7:48 and 17:24 is found: "the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands." The only suitable temple of the living God is the souls of living beings who can adore and love him.<sup>50</sup> While it is not untrue that the individual

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46. Allo (N. 18), page 186. We are indebted to Allo for this very appropriate term.

47. Windisch (N. 19), page 214.

48. "One can let himself be dedicated by Osiris and Dionisus, but nevermore by Christ and Dionisus" (Windisch N. 19, page 215).

49. Wendland (N. 16), pages 187-88.

50. Plummer (N. 24), page 209, who adds that haemeîs

body of a believer (I Cor. 6:15) is a "temple of the Holy Spirit," it is very important to recognize that the whole Christian Church as well as the individual Christian is regarded here as God's sanctuary (I Cor. 3:16, 6:19, Eph. 2:21).<sup>51</sup> The idea of divine residence in the pious is generally foreign to the Old Testament (where God is described as 'accompanying' a person).<sup>52</sup> The idea first appears in Hellenistic Judaism.<sup>53</sup>

diò exélthate ek méson autoôn

It is characteristic of Paul in his epistles to state his theory before he gives practical advice or commands (cf. Rom. 1-12, also 13-16). The first command in verse 14 could be considered part of a "theoretical section" because the command ekselthate...aphoristhaete appears to be broader than mae ginethe hete-rozygountes. The diò introduces the practical section to be drawn from verses 14-16.<sup>54</sup> Its language comes from the utterances of Jehovah in the Old Testament. In the context of the above verses, the withdrawal is to be "moral and spiritual, not local."<sup>55</sup> The withdrawal, Paul advises, is not primarily negative in character (as it was in monasticism) but is a movement for a purpose. There is a necessity to remain in the world to act as a moral and spiritual leaven (cf. the Great Commission, Mt. 28:18-19), but Christians are to come out from the corrupting moral influence of the world. It is essentially a tactical and strategic move. Christians will be free to be the "Light of the world" and the "Salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13-16) if they remain at a distance from the corrosive moral influence of the world. It is also true that the corrupt moral influence is only part of the total world. The action is very much like a military move or a gambit in chess; the purpose is to prevent damage and gain an advantage. It is both a retreat and an advance.

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is very emphatic and one ought not to read hymeis. J. Hering agrees with the reading, but minimizes the difference.

51. Plummer (N.24), pages 208-209.

52. Windisch (N.19), page 216.

53. Plummer points out that we have the word naos rather than hieron which included buildings for other uses than that of worship; naos is from naiein, "to dwell" (page 209).

54. Plummer (N.24), page 209.

55. Ibid., page 209.

kāgōð eisde x omai hvmās

There is to be a family likeness<sup>56</sup> and a family affection between God and his children. They have to be called out of their original home, and the new one will more than compensate the loss.<sup>57</sup> In verses 14 and 17, three commands are found and, as is often the case in Scripture, God gives a promise with the command, not only to encourage obedience, but out of his love and mercy, to bless. The two promises in verses 16 and 18 are essentially the same, that God's children will live in continuous fellowship with Him. The Son has made it possible for the redeemed to inherit jointly with the Son (cf. Rom. 8:17, Gal. 4:7). There is a more than passing significance in the word thygateras. Isa. 43:6 is the forerunner of the idea that God has "daughters" as well as sons.<sup>59</sup> It was certainly one of Paul's goals to raise up and care for women who could so easily go astray in the worldly city of Corinth. In the Lord there is neither man nor woman.<sup>60</sup>

tautas ōnēchontes tas epangelias

Verse 1 of chapter 7 suffers from the incorrect division of the chapters which occasionally occurs in the Scriptures.<sup>61</sup> It really belongs to the previous chapter in order to complete the thought and 7:2 takes up the train of thought left at 6:13.

Paul mentions the promises (verses 16-18) and implies that the encouragement from them and the reasons behind them (verses 14b-16a) are to be used by the Christians as motivation to make and keep their Christian walk acceptable to the Lord.

...but in all their walk through life (they) become soiled and are in need of frequent cleansing

56. Plummer (N.24), page 210.

57. Ibid., page 210.

58. Windisch (N. 19), page 217.

59. This truth was only dimly recognized until Christianity raised woman from the degradation into which she had been thrust not only in heathen cities, like Corinth, but even among the Chosen People. Cf. with the wording in II Sam. 7:14 (Plummer, N.24, page 210).

60. Allo (N.18), page 187.

61. The ōn indicates that 7:1 is a part of what comes before. See also, for example, I Cor. 12:31b and its obvious connection with the first verse of chapter 13.

(Jn. 3:10). He who looks for a fulfilment of the gracious promises must strive to be katharōs hólos. If we are to have God dwell in us, we must purify the dwelling. If we are to have Him as a father, we must strive to acquire some likeness to him.<sup>62</sup>

The verb katharísōmen is found in Biblical Greek, occurs in Josephus and is found in inscriptions in approximately the sense as here, signifying the necessity of purifying oneself before entering a sanctuary.<sup>63</sup>

The expression molysmōi sarkos kai pneumatōs posed a problem for Paul's opponents as well as for present day theoreticians who want to "gnosticize" or hellenize too much of Paul's teaching (Allo calls it "this extremely clear passage").<sup>64</sup> They agree with Paul that the flesh is a place of sin, and itself contaminated, but find great difficulty in his use of the term "spirit" because of their dualistic views of the nature of flesh and spirit. It is a dualism of the type one might expect; that flesh was impossible to cleanse, and the spirit was necessarily a divine substance, not subject to soiling. Marcion, rejecting the wording, changes pneumatōs to haimatos.<sup>65</sup> Lietzmann, Reitzenstein and others<sup>66</sup> looked for an exceptional sense in what the term meant. Windisch offers a solution by examining Paul's terminology; sārx and pneuma cannot be said to be strange to the Pauline terminology".<sup>67</sup>

the objection to the entire expression can be eliminated if one admits that Paul's terminology does not always convey sārx = power of sin, and pneuma = form-idea (Formbegriffe). Much more often, Paul interchanges sārx and soōma. In Rom. 8:10,13 he uses soōma, where one would expect sārx. This is true in the case of this passage (II Cor. 7:1). Sārx occasionally has a neutral meaning, entirely in the meaning of the OT, signifying natural man from birth to death.<sup>68</sup>

The two substantives sārx and soōma should be taken in the psychological and not in the ethical sense. This is not at all rare.<sup>69</sup>

62. Plummer (N.24), page 211.

63. Ibid.

64. Allo (N.18), page 187.

65. Tertullian, "Adv. Marc. V,12, quoted by Allo (N.18) page 187.

66. Allo (N.18), page 187.

67. Windisch (N. 19), page 219.

68. Ibid.

69. Allo (N.18), quoting Bachmann, page 188.

The verb molýnoō means stain, defile, make impure, soil. It is used by Strabo, Plutarch, Heliodorus, and is found in I Esdras, II Maccabees, and Josephus. All use it in terms of figurative defilement of religious and moral things, but Arndt and Gingrich maintain that as used in our passage it refers to inward and outward defilement.<sup>70</sup>

Man may be defiled in either flesh or spirit, and in either case there must be cleansing. The two together sum up human nature and the intercommunion of the parts is so close that when either is soiled the whole is soiled.

epitelountes hagioosýnaen en phóboo Theou.

The "fear of the Lord" does not imply, of course, a craven fear, but is taken from a principle given repeatedly in the Old Testament; that fear of the Lord is the Principle of a good life.<sup>71</sup> If a man performs all of his ethical actions out of fear, which is a wholesome respect and humility, he is operating under the "fear of the Lord." The command is designed to keep a man from being proud before his Maker. Fear, as meant here, is respectful and obedient reverence to a loving father. In Eph. 5:21, "what is said in the OT of Jehovah is in a remarkable way transferred to Christ, phóboo Christou."<sup>72</sup>

### Vocabulary Analysis

In the light of recent statistical and philological investigation, the previous importance attached to hapax legomena in some scripture passages may be diminished. Our passage in II Corinthians is an example. Strictly speaking, a hapax legomenon is "(a word) said or used but once as a rare word, verbal form, etc., evidences by a single citation."<sup>73</sup> As such, this definition has been used to question the authenticity of Pauline authorship, implying that the presence of enough "peculiar" words, i.e., non-regularly used words, would argue against Pauline style, and consequently, Pauline authorship. Investigation of letters generally held by Grayston and Herdan<sup>74</sup> now makes this difficult to main-

70. Arndt & Gingrich (N.9), page 528.

71. Plummer (N. 24), page 212.

72. Ibid.

73. Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, second ed., unabridged, Merriam, Springfield, 1957, page 1136.

74. Grayston, K., & Herdan, K., "The Authorship of the Pastorals in the Light of Statistical Linguistics"

tain.

Epistle	Vocabulary	Number of words peculiar to each	Thus
Romans	1068	281	26.3%
I Cor.	967	246	25.4%
II Cor.	792	177	22.4%
Galatians	526	92	17.4%
Phil.	448	75	16.7%

J. Jeremias lists 261 "new" words for Romans in his introduction to the Pastoral Epistles in Neues Testament Deutsch (Bd. 4, page 5).

A short re-examination of the six hapax legomena may be useful at this point;

- (a) heterozygōntes occurs only once in Paul, but as noted on page 22, is modelled on an adjective from an Old Testament quotation.
- (b) metochae occurs only once in Paul, but a related word metochos is found six times in the New Testament. It is difficult then, to call it a "foreign" word in the strict sense.
- (c) symphōnōnesis occurs in four different forms in the New Testament and nine times in the LXX. This word would hardly be unfamiliar to Paul.
- (d) Beliar and synkatáthesis are true hapax legomena by Paul in the strict sense and do not appear at any other place in the New Testament.
- (e) molybdos has related words occurring in Rev. 3:4, Acts 5:38, I Cor. 8:7.<sup>75</sup>

Summary: two of the six are hapax legomena without other related Old Testament root words in the New Testament. Conclusion: the presence of these peculiar words is not as significant as formerly thought.<sup>76</sup> It is poss-

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New Testament Studies, 6 (1959), page 9.

75. Morgenthaler, Robert, Statistik des Neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes, Zürich, Gotthelf-Verlag, 1958, pages 101, 120, 121, 145.
76. and would cast further doubt on the argument of Fitzmeyer that this is one of the several reasons to reject the passage as Pauline. Fitzmeyer has shown several interesting similarities between Essene writings and this passage, but they go no further than that. His statement "the appearance of Christ (Christou pros Beliar) is clear proof of a reworking of Qumran expressions and ideas" and "it is difficult to deny the reworking of Qumran."

ible to reconstruct a significant part of the text and most of the main ideas from the Old Testament quotations alone. II Cor. 6:14 has two quotations, 6:16 has five, 6:17 has two, and 6:18 has four quotations which are either directly responsible for the content or are alluded to.

### The Relationship of I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1.

Critical opinion on the relationship of the II Corinthian passage to its surrounding text has undergone some change since Robertson and Plummer wrote in 1914:

Some critics, however, think that part of it (the letter previous to I Cor.) survives in II Cor. 6:14-7:1, an hypothesis which has not found many supporters.<sup>77</sup>

Robertson, Plummer, Lietzmann, Héring, Allo, Wendland and Windisch maintain the original idea that II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is an original part of II Cor., and not a surviving fragment of the Previous Letter. Later scholars, T.H. Gaster and John Hurd hold that it can be part of the Previous Letter. Fitzmeyer concludes that it is Essene in origin.<sup>78</sup>

Whatever the answer, the conditions which gave rise to the problem grew out of the following interaction between Paul and the Corinthian church: (a) Paul preaches at Corinth and the church there is established, (b) after Paul leaves, the letter called the "Previous Letter" is written, (c) oral and written information come to Paul (probably while he is at Ephesus). Some of this was in the form of questions and some were comments on problems within the church; (d) Paul answers with the letter now called I Corinthians.<sup>79</sup>

The core of any argument that the II Cor. passage comes from outside the surrounding text will involve the Corinthian text (as opposed to Paul's personality and style) and the processes of interpolation, misplacement and editing. If interpolation is the case, the interpolator chose a poor place to insert it. Sufficient internal evidence to warrant insertion is lacking.

expressions and ideas" is supported only by these similarities, and not by concrete evidence of an Essene text being incorporated into the Corinthian text.

77. Robertson & Plummer (N.7), page xxi.

78. K.G. Kuhn is less sure of its Essene origin, saying "Paul is perhaps citing here an Essene text" (Kuhn, K.G., "Les Rouleaux de Cuivre de Qumran," Revue Biblique, 61, 1954, page 203, n.2).

79. I am following the scheme laid out by John Hurd



The basis for any argument that II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is integral to its surrounding text lies in the style and personality of Paul. It is known that his thought processes were rapid and sometimes erratic; this would support the contention that he paused in writing or dictating to pursue another train of thought. By itself this would be difficult to prove. Plummer has a suggestion which is helpful:

It is not incredible that in the middle of his appeal for mutual frankness and affection, and after his declaration that the cramping constraint is all on their side, he should dart off to one main cause of that constraint, viz. their compromising attitude toward anti-Christian influences. Having relieved his mind of this distressing subject, he returns at once to his tender appeal. On the whole, this view seems better than the hypothesis of interpolation.<sup>80</sup>

There is no evidence in any manuscript or version or quotation that any copy of the Epistle ever lacked this passage.<sup>80</sup>

Conclusion: that II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is very likely a part of the text around it, and has been neither misplaced, inserted, nor is from an Essene source. This is based on the weakened significance of the hapax legomena, both because of the occurrence of numerous other peculiar words in the Pauline letters, and because several of the hapax legomena are either Old Testament quotations or have related words in the New Testament. This author considers it possible that later and more complete evidence might show it to be part of the Previous Letter, since he considers I Cor. 5:9-13 to have a significant bearing upon it. At any rate, without entirely new and fresh evidence, he considers it Pauline.

#### Conclusion

Nothing is said or implied about "doctrinal" separation, i.e., orthodox separating from less orthodox. It is true that the term "idolators" is mentioned, but no special stress is given it above any of the other terms. In the light of the fact that other lists of sins are given in other parts of the New Testament, any stress upon this idea over the others would have to be considered out of context. In this passage separation is commanded only for reasons of moral offence.

In cases where separation is legitimate, it is to

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(N.6), page 58.

80. Plummer (N.24), page 205.

take a reverse direction than the ones the Corinthians tended to take. Rather than being separated from the world, it should be more in the direction of internal discipline within the congregation. The Christian is to be in the world (geographically) but not of the world (in spirit).<sup>81</sup>

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81. What do we know of the remaining history of the church at Corinth?

"From this point, nothing whatever is known of Paul's Corinthian relations. The Church there never rose to leadership, and it is interesting to note that at the close of the first century, their continued factionalism and strife there provoked a letter of censure and exhortation from Clement of Rome."

(Pherigo, L.P., "Paul and the Corinthian Church," Journal of Biblical Literature, vol. lxviii, 1949, page 349.)

## CHAPTER THREE

Riedeman's Interpretation of the Two Corinthian  
Texts

I Cor. 5:9-13  
II Cor. 6:14-7:1

## 1. I Cor. 5:9-13

In the Froschauer Bible the passage runs so:

(9) Ich hab euch geschriben in dem brieff das jr nichts sollend zeschaffen haben mit den hureren, (10) das mein ich gar nit von den hureren diser welt, oder von den rouberen, oder von denen die die bilder eerend, jr musstind anders uss der welt gon. (11) Jetzt aber hab ich euch geschriben jr sollind nichts nit jnen zuschaffen haben. (Namlich) So nemants ist der sich eined bruder nennen lasst, und ein hurer ist, oder ein gentiger, oder ein eerer der bilderen, oder ein schalter, oder ein sauffer, oder ein rouber, mit dem selben sollend jr nun nit essen. (12) Dann was gond mich die daussen an, das ich sy solt richten? Richtend jr nit die, die da innen sind? (13) Gott aber wirt die daussen sind, richten. Thund von euch hinauss war da boss ist.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Die Gantze Bibel, das ist alle bücher allts unnd neuws Testaments / den vrsprunglichen spraachen nach, auff's aller trewliches vertedtscher, Ge-  
truckt zu Zürich bey Christoffel Froschouer, im Jar als man zalt M.D. XXXVI Und im Jar MD CC XLIV aufs neue nachgedruckt zu Strassburg bey Simon Kurssner, page 176.

References to the passage in I Cor.<sup>2</sup> appear five times in the *Rechenschaft*. In the first instance, Riedeman refers to the passage as a whole. He cites I Cor. 5:9-13 in response to the question, "How are we then certain that all whom we receive in our meetings have the Holy Spirit?" His reply is that the Hutterites are sure that everyone who believes is sealed with the Holy Spirit. He continues:

But what God hath reserved for himself, namely whether or not one believeth as he confesseth - that we leave to his power until the time that he reveal him, that he may be put away in accordance with the word of him who commandeth us \*I Cor. 5:9-13\* to put away evil.<sup>2</sup>

The very fact that Riedeman uses these verses (which command that an offender be put away) indicates that this is his interpretation of the passage. Is this a legitimate and proper application? He may be considered correct here if (a) Paul's list of offenders specifically mentions this person, or this type of person, or (b) if when Paul speaks of evil in general his usage is broad enough to include the offender Riedeman mentions.

The closest mention Paul makes to such a person, "one who does not believe as he confesses," is the mention of an idolator, *eidoololátraes*. Bauer (Arndt-Gingrich) is helpful in determining just what Paul meant by this term. The verb *eidoololatréoo* (be or become an idolator) speaks of Christians who consult oracles, and the noun idolator *eidoololátraes* refers to Christians<sup>3</sup>

2. Riedeman, Peter, Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehr und Glaubens, von den Brüdern, so man die Hutterischen nennt, ausgangen 1565, Cotswold=Bruderhof, Ashton Kennes, Wilts, England, 1938, page 182.  
English Translation: Account of our Religion, Doctrine and Faith, Given by Peter Riedeman, Of The Brothers Whom Men Call Hutterians, tr. Kathleen E. Hasenberger, M.A., 1st Edition, Bungay, Suffolk (England), Printed for Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., by Richard Clay and Company, Ltd., 1950, page 168.  
Note: The English translation is called Confession of Faith, and will be referred to as such. It is the practice of both the *Rechenschaft* and the *Confession* to refer to the verse quoted immediately before the phrase or sentence to which it pertains. This will be indicated by \*-\* in this dissertation.
3. Arndt, W.F., & Gingrich, F.W., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (tr. by Arndt-Gingrich from W. Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen Urchristlichen Literatur, "fourth ed., 1949-52), Chicago, 1957, page 220.

who consult false prophets or become apostate under persecution. As the Anabaptists were persecuted with "regularity and dispatch" this limited reference to idolator could apply here; it is the only situation however which is applicable. We can be sure that Riedeman does not limit it to this instance from a further reading of the Rechenschaft, and investigation in chapter three to follow.

Within the framework of I Cor. 5:9-13 Paul speaks of a few specific offenders. His reference is not broad enough to cover Riedeman's application.

## 2. I Cor. 5:13<sup>4</sup> (cf. above, page 37)

Both I Cor. 5:11 and 5:13 occur in the short section "Concerning Exclusion" (Vom Bann) and will be discussed together. There is a curious discrepancy in Riedeman's quotation of Paul's statement in 5:13.

Paul saith, \*I Cor. 5:13\*, "Put away from among yourselves what is evil." (Tuent von euch hinaus, was böse ist.)<sup>4</sup>

For reasons not quite clear, he has made an incorrect quotation here, the correct one being, "remove the evil man out of yourselves." The word "what" (German: was) makes it appear that Riedeman reads Paul as saying, "cast out whatever evil (things) you find." Because this is in agreement with Riedeman's severe doctrine of the purity of the church, further investigation is warranted.

1) The Greek reads τὸν ποναρόν, which in this case is accusative singular masculine (because of the article it cannot be accusative neuter). There is however another fact which makes it necessary to assume Paul did not mean for them to put away evil in the general sense in this passage. The context and usage of I Cor. 5:9-13 argues against it since Paul uses phrases like "immoral men", v.9; "the immoral of this world," v.10; or "not to associate with anyone," v.11; or "(he is guilty of immorality," v.11; "not even to eat with such a person," v.11. Thus Paul refers to evil person or persons six times before he makes his concluding statement, "drive out the wicked (person) from among you," v.13.

2) The Latin Vulgate<sup>6</sup> gives malum, which can mean

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4. Rechenschaft, page 141, Confession, page 131 (N.2). The translator, Kathleen Hasenberg, has rendered the German exactly, and the mistake appears also in the English.

5. Analytical Greek Lexicon, Harpers, New York, n.d., page 336.

6. Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine, E. Nestle-K. Aland, 21 Auflage; Stuttgart, Württembergische Bibel-

either a thing or a person. Only one German Bible has been found by the present author to contain any phrase which would lend itself to the idea that I Cor. 5:13b says "evil" (and evil). This is the Deutsche Bibel, 2 Theil, (teil) Augsburg, Gunther Zainer, 1477, which says, "Nempt hin das ubel (the evil 'thing') auss euch-selber ", page CCLXVIII. As far as can be ascertained however, Anabaptist and Hutterite literature show no acquaintance with it.

3) The Weimarer Ausgabe of the Luther Bible<sup>7</sup> gives the following reading:

"Thut von euch selb hynaus, wer da bose ist."  
(Das Neue Testament 1522)

A Luther Bible printed in Strasbourg in 1529-30<sup>8</sup> reads,

"Thut vo euch selbs hinaus wer da bose ist."

The Luther Bible of 1546 (Weimarer Ausgabe: Aus der Bibel) reads,

"Thut von euch selbs hinaus, wer da bose ist."

4) Let us then proceed by examining Bible editions that the Anabaptists were known to have used.

Among the people, especially the Anabaptists, the first editions of the Froschauer Bibles and Testaments were greatly loved....Froschauer Bible(s); (were) German Bibles and Testaments published by Christoph Froschauer. They were very popular because of clear type, pictorial decoration, and popular language. They are known from editions in 1524-89. The Froschauer Bibles and Testaments were originally reprints of Luther's translations, altered in word order and vocabulary, more rarely in the text itself....From its continual revision arose the Zurich Bible.<sup>9</sup>

Thus a Bible used by the Anabaptists between the years 1520-40 would yield significant evidence.

The Froschauer NT Edition of 1527<sup>10</sup> reads "Tund

anstalt, 1962, page 433.

7. Luther, Martin, Die Deutsche Bibel, Bd.7, Böhlaus, Weimar, 1931, page 100.

8. Luther, Martin, Die Gantz Bibel, Strassbourg, Koeph, 1529-30, no page number.

9. Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. II, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1956, page 415. Also, see "Notes on the Translation," pages 280-1, Confessions.

von euch hinaus wer da boss ist." "Wer" necessarily refers to a person (the evil offender to be excommunicated) and therefore cannot mean evil as a thing or evil in general.

The 1536 Froschauer edition,<sup>11</sup> a much larger book, also gives the reading, "Thund von euch war da boss ist" again referring to an evil person.

The Bibles of the Reformation all read "evil person," as does the King James Version, the more recent Revised Standard Version, the Berkeley Bible, and the New English Bible. They read so because of context.

Why did Peter Riedeman misquote Paul at this point? There are at least three possibilities: (a) The particular Bible he was using may have had an error; this is unlikely since the Luther and Froschauer Bibles read "evil person". (b) It is possible that Riedeman was influenced by the Vulgate where malum could be understood as "evil thing." The possibility, however, is very remote. Its only basis would be that the Vulgate was available at that time; Anabaptists are known to have preferred other Bibles (see quotation on previous page). (c) Riedeman could have made a slip of the pen. The deep love and reverence the Anabaptists had for the scriptures would in itself argue against this. Though few of them were university educated, they were never intentionally careless or lazy in their treatment of the scriptures. Even if Riedeman did make a slip of the pen at this point, it is unlikely that the wide readership of the Roehenshaft among the Hutterites would not have noticed it.<sup>12</sup> (d) The last possibility is that Riedeman wrote what he did here because of the doctrine of the purity of the church was in his mind. It is not unreasonable to think that when he is writing about such a sensitive and predominant idea as church purity, he would unconsciously let this govern his thinking. This

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10. Das Neuw Testament / grudtlich und recht verteüschet  
Gedruckt zu Zürich Bey Christoffel Froschouer, 15 :  
page 235.

This particular edition would have been attractive to the Anabaptists. The pages measure 7 cm. by 11.1 cm. (2 3/4 by 4 3/8 inches) and is about 4 cm.

(1 1/2 inches) thick. The whole Bible with Apocrypha is contained in six of these little books, one of which is the New Testament. This little book, or all, could have been easily carried by an Anabaptist in his work or travels.

11. Die Gantze Bibel, das ist alle bücher allts unnd  
neüws Testaments/den vrsprunglichen spraachen nach  
auffs aller treüwliches verteütscher, Getruckt zu  
Zürich bey Christoffel Froschouer, im Jar als man  
zalt M.D. XXXVI Und im Jar MD CC XLIV. aufs neue  
nachgedruckt zu Strassburg bey Simon Kurssner,

is not to say he is careless, but that like everyone else he may at times be governed by his presuppositions. Further investigation of the text will add weight to this possibility.

3. I Cor. 5:11<sup>13</sup> (cf. above, page 37)

This passage occurs in the same section as the previous quotation and is simply a quotation of verse 11. There is no problem.

4. I Cor. 5:12<sup>14</sup> (cf. above, page 37)

Since, as is said above, \*Lk.16:19-26\* all temporal things are foreign to us and naught is our own, a Christian can neither strive, quarrel, nor go to law on their account; on the contrary, as one whose heart is turned from the world and set upon what is divine, he should suffer wrong....It followeth from this that no Christian can sit upon or call a court. For Christians do not go to law in this way. Paul saith, \*I Cor. 5:12\* "For what have I to do to judge them that are without?"<sup>14</sup>

Riedeman's dualism<sup>15</sup> begins to show in his quoting of the parable of Lazarus and Dives (Lk.16:19-26), to maintain that the Christian must not go to court in striving to regain temporal goods and justice here on earth. The content of verse 25 ("Son, remember that you in your lifetime received good things, and Lazarus... evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish") would easily lend itself to the idea that "wealth in itself merits hell, and poverty in itself is rewarded by paradise." Rather, is not the thrust of this parable that "impiety and lovelessness are punished, and piety and humility are rewarded."<sup>16</sup>

Riedeman is basing his repudiation of the world on a misinterpretation of the parable. Likewise, the citing of I Cor. 5:12 shows that he misunderstands the mind of Paul when he speaks of judgment. The Apostle and the Hutterite theologian have only the subject of

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12. The Rechenschaft became the central document of the Moravian Anabaptists (Heimann, Franz, Lehre von der Kirche und Gemeinschaft in der Hutterischen Tauffer-Gemeinde, Diss., Wien, 1927, page 20).
13. Rechenschaft, page 142; Confession, page 132 (N.2).
14. Rechenschaft, page 120; Confession, page 113 (N.2).
15. Dualism is defined here as : spirit is good, matter is evil.
16. Jeremias, J., The Parables of Jesus, tr. S.H. Hooke 6th Ed.; New York, Scribners, 1962, page 185.



judgment in common. In this instance Riedeman shows himself to be understanding only superficially what Paul meant, which was that Christians in Corinth were not to concern themselves with evaluating the behavior of non-believers - those outside.<sup>17</sup> There are two reasons; (a) that function is reserved for God, and (b) the Corinthians have their own hands full with problems of internal discipline.

The Apostle's subject is church discipline, which involves moral judgment. The question "why not suffer and be defrauded" pertains to a legal judgment. Riedeman commits a serious hermeneutical error when he takes this verse and uses it to support his argument that a Christian is not to go to court, and cannot participate in governmental activities. His interpretation here has no basis. If he wanted to put forward the idea that Christians should stay out of court, he could have found other verses. There is even a difference between going to court in a lawsuit and participating in government that society may have order.

5. I Cor. 5:12<sup>18</sup>(cf. above, page 37)

The problem with the use of this verse is the same as in the previous verse discussed.

If one were to say, however, "It is necessary (to have governmental authority) because of evil men," this we have already answered in saying that the power of the sword hath passed to the heathen, that they may therewith punish their evildoers. But that is no concern of ours; as Paul saith, \*I Cor. 5:12\*"What have I to do with them that are without?" Thus no Christian can rule over the world.<sup>19</sup>

Riedeman makes the same error in this quotation: failure to distinguish between ecclesiastical discipline and legal judgment. His principle of interpretation seems then to be this; that if he has an idea which he wishes to support biblically, it is only necessary to find other verses of Scripture which have words indicating the same subject rather than similar contexts. The word 'judge' is an example. Apparently

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17. "Those outside" is frequently found as a term for non-believers (I Thess. 4:12; Col. 4:5; II Tim. 3:7; Mk. 4:11). Interpreter's Bible, Ed. G.A. Buttrick, vol. 10, Nashville, Abingdon, 1953, page 68.
  18. Rechenschaft, page 113; Confession, page 107 (N.2).
  19. Rechenschaft, page 113; Confession, page 107 (N.2).

the time setting, the local situation, the individuals to whom the words were written, who wrote them, and the relationship of the ideas in the paragraph are not limiting for him. These are used only as they fit his presuppositions about the nature of the world, his view of the nature of man, and his very definite ideas about the nature of the church.

### Summary

Riedeman uses these five quotations with the following results:

1. I Cor. 5:9-13      Correct in a limited way, but Riedeman will not limit it.
2. I Cor. 5:13      Misquotes the verse referred to; may indicate he is governed by his presuppositions.
3. I Cor. 5:11      Reference used is correct.
4. I Cor. 5:12      Dualism present here; fails to distinguish between church discipline and legal judgment.
5. I Cor. 5:12      Fails to distinguish between church discipline and legal judgment.

Thus, out of the five times Riedeman has used the I Cor. passage, only one instance fails to present a problem; two are borderline cases; and the remaining two instances show incorrect usage.

### Calvin's Comments On The Text of I Corinthians 5

John Calvin's discussion of the I Cor. 5 passage in his "Articles concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva"<sup>20</sup> concerns preparation of the church members for the Lord's Supper reveals

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20. Calvin, John, "Articles Concerning the Organization of The Church and of Worship at Geneva Proposed by the Ministers of the Council, January 16, 1537," Calvin: Theological Treatises, tr. J.K.S. Reid, vol. XXII, Library of Christian Classics, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1954, page 47-56.

some significant similarities and differences between Calvin and Riedeman. These are related to the nature of the Church and reasons for separation.

Calvin lists three reasons for keeping no company with "those who call themselves Christians and yet are notoriously lewd, avaricious, slanderous, or drunken, and given to robbery":<sup>21</sup>

honor of  
Christ  
upheld

"First: that Jesus Christ be not blasphemed and dishonored as if his Church were a confederation of evil persons, dissolute in all vices."

disobedient  
to repent  
and be  
restored

"Second: that those who receive such correction, being ashamed and disturbed by their sin, should come to know and amend themselves"

obedient and  
innocent  
protected  
from sin

"Third: that others be not corrupted and perverted in their way of life, but rather by their example be turned from manifesting like faults."

It is important to notice that in all three reasons the concern is with persons. There is no direct mention of the purity of the church. The first priority is persons. If these three goals are obtained, the result will certainly be a church which is as pure as possible on this earth. Church purity is thus possible without making it a first priority.

It would be unfair to Riedeman to assert that he was not concerned with these three matters. He seeks them, however, through a category lower than personality. Discipleship, so resolutely stressed, and church purity, so dominant a priority (indeed it is his first priority!) are not persons. They are ideas and doctrines. Discipleship is an action in relation to a person and can assume such importance that it may obscure the person. It is possible that overstressing church purity can lead to excessive preoccupation with the self and the group. The church is not the person of Christ; it is his body and bride; and it is not yet perfected.

Calvin's discussion of I Cor. 5:11-12 in the Institutes stresses that even if the church is slack in

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21. Calvin, John (N.20), page 51.

its duty of disciplining individuals, each individual does not have the right to take upon himself the decision to separate.<sup>22</sup> While realizing that "it is the godly man's duty to abstain from familiarity with the wicked" it is one thing to actively avoid their companionship and quite another "...in hating them, to renounce the communion of the church."<sup>23</sup> This is directly applicable to the misuse of II Cor. 6:17 (Come out from among them...) and its over rigid application.

The most complete treatment of I Cor. 5 comes, naturally, in the commentary on I Corinthians.

Verse 10 "For then you would have to go out of the world."<sup>24</sup> Riedeman does not comment on verse 10, but Calvin's remarks are germane to Riedeman's idea. Calvin takes the word "world" to mean this present life, which would make his explanation read "...for then you would have to go out of this present life...", an obvious impossibility as both Paul and Calvin realize. Calvin confirms this point by citing the prayer of Jesus in John 17:15 "I pray not Father, that thou shouldst take them out of this world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." Calvin says he understands the phrase "to go out: to mean "to be separated"; and the "world" to mean the "filthy things of this world."<sup>25</sup> This is a significant difference. For Calvin there are good and bad things within the universe. God, the Creator, said he was pleased with it; "...behold it was very good." Gen. 1:31. The world in Riedeman's view is something to separate oneself from.

Verse 13: "Put away the wicked man..." (eicete ecclesiam, exarate tōn pōnerōn). Calvin says the "wicked man" is usually thought of as the individual who committed incest with his mother-in-law.<sup>26</sup>

The Latin of Calvin's text reads: (verse 13) "Extraneos vero Deus indicat: eicete scelestum ex vobis ipsis."<sup>27</sup> The present Vulgate text reads "Auferte malum ex vobis ipsis."<sup>28</sup> This however is no problem since Cal-

22. Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, tr. F.B. Lewis, Ed. J.T. McNeill, Library of Christian Classics, vol. XX & XXI, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1960, 4-I-15.

23. Calvin, John (N.22), Institutes, 4-I-15.

24. Calvin, John, The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, tr. J.W. Fraser, Ed. D.W. & T.F. Torrance, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1960, page 112.

25. Calvin, John, Commentary on First Corinthians (N. 24), page 113.

26. Calvin, John (N.24), page 115.

27. Calvin, John, Commentary on Corinthians, tr. John Pringle, Edinburgh, n.d., page 190.

28. Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine (N.6), page 443.

vin concludes with:

For those who take the badness to mean evil or an evil thing (malum) are refuted by Paul's Greek, where the article is masculine.<sup>29</sup>

## II Cor. 6:14-7:1

The Froschauer Bible of 1536 translates the passage this way:

(14) Ziehend nit am frombden joch mit den unglaubigen. Dann was hat die frommkeit gemeinsame mit der unfrommkeit? Was hat das liecht fur gemeinschaft mit der finsternuss? (15) Wie stimmt Christus mit Belial? oder was fur ein teil hat der glaub mit dem unglauben? (16) Was hat der tempel Gottes fur ein gleiche mit den gotzen? Ir aber sind der tempel dess l  bendigen Gottes, wie dann Gott spricht: Ich wil in jnen wonen, und in jnen wandlen, und wil jrer Gott sein, und sn sollend mein volck sein. (17) Darumb gond auss mitten von jnen, und absunderen euch (spricht der Herr) und rurend kein unreins an, so wil ich euch annemen. (18) und euwer vatter sein, und jr sollend meine sun und tochter sein spricht der allm  chtig Herr. (7:1) Djeweil wir nun soliche verheissung habend, meine liebsten, so lassend uns von aller befleckung dess fleischs und dess geists uns reinigen, und furfahren mit der heiligung in der forcht Gottes.<sup>30</sup>

Riedeman's references to II Cor. 6 fall conveniently into four subject groups. With some exceptions, they run consecutively from verse 14 to the end of the chapter. Riedeman does not refer to II Cor. 7:1 in the Rechenenschaft, nor in the letters presently available.

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29. Calvin, J. (N.24), page 115.

30. Die Gantze Bibel... (N.1), pages 191-192.

	<u>Verse</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1.	6:14-16	swearing
2.	6:14-16	dwell in them
3.	6:14-16	
4.	6:16	
5.	6:16-18	
6.	6:16-18	separation
7.	6:16-18	
8.	6:14-18	
9.	6:14-18	
10.	6:15	
11.	6:14-18	
12.	6:15	
13.	6:15	
14.	6:17-18	God the Father and His Children
15.	6:16-18	
16.	6:15	
17.	6:17-18	
18.	6:17-18	
19.	6:14-18	
20.	6:14-18	
21.	6:16	
22.	6:18	
23.	6:17-18	
24.	6:17-18	
25.	6:17-18	

#### Swearing

1. II Cor. 6:14-16<sup>31</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

This reference comes in the last paragraph of an eleven page section, "Concerning Swearing, About Which There is So Much Controversy." The reference to II Cor. 6:14-16 is an oblique one.

Therefore the devout will walk in the truth, allow it to rule and guide them and hold to the same; whatsoever it stirreth, speaketh, and doeth within them, believe and observe the same; and this for the sake of the truth which is God himself, which dwelleth in them. Therefore they neither\*II Cor. 6:14-16\* need nor desire any oath.<sup>31</sup>

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31. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 223; Confession, page 205.

The quotation as used is appropriate because it speaks to the broad situation of "partnership with iniquity, fellowship with light and darkness," the non-accord of "Christ with Belial," even though II Cor. 6:14-7:1 makes no reference to the using of oaths. Lev. 26:11-13 is used in connection with God dwelling in them.

#### Dwell In Them

2. II Cor. 6:14-16<sup>32</sup> (cf. above, page 47)  
also Lev. 26:1-13

With this reference begins the second group of citations from II Cor. 6 under the subject of (God will) "dwell in them." Under this heading it is quoted five times. Riedeman first describes:

that God at the beginning made and created \*Gen. 1:26,27\* man as a dwelling for himself, since he made him in his likeness, and also, as the wise man saith, it was well with them, and there was no poison of destruction in them.

It followeth from this, since there was to be nothing of destruction in them, that all good,\* Gen. 17:1-8\* which is God himself,\* II Cor. 6:14-16\* was to dwell in them: which thing is shown by the likeness of God, in which he was created.<sup>32</sup>

The Biblical references used here by Riedeman present some problems. When the biblical account of creation states that God made man in his likeness, it does not necessarily follow that God dwells in man. In fact, there is no mention or implication of this in the Genesis narrative. We know that Riedeman is not referring to a future dwelling because of the nature of his second statement about God dwelling in man. ("...God himself was to dwell in them; which thing is shown by the likeness of God in which he was created.") Riedeman shows his intention to connect the two things: "...which thing is shown by...". However the picture one observes in the Old Testament from the creation of man to Pentecost in the New Testament is that God is said to dwell with and among <sup>33</sup>his people. His Spirit is gi-

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32. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 166, Confession, page 154.

33. With; Ps. 23:4 (the whole Psalm is in the sense of "with" but not "in"). Ps. 27 describes the watchful care of Jehovah, with, not in; Ps. 34:18:....'near to'....; Ps. 139:10. Among: Lev. 26:12, Hag. 2:5.

ven to and upon<sup>34</sup> a selected few. It is only with the event of Pentecost that we have the phenomenon of God dwelling in the church and in individuals.<sup>35</sup>

Secondly there is a time problem with Riedeman's usage of Lev. 26:11 (abode among you) and II Cor. 6:14-16. He uses these New Testament verses with regard to God dwelling in man when he was first created. If he uses the New Testament quotation simply as a general reference to the fact that God dwells in man, without regard to time, there is no problem. However he has stated that God dwelt in man when first created (which is incorrect as previously shown) and then supported the idea with a reference from the New Testament. Not even Lev. 26:1-13 speaks of God dwelling in man at creation. Like II Cor. 6:14-16, it speaks in this instance of the right relationship between child and father as conditional, dependent upon obedience.

### 3. II Cor. 6:14-16<sup>36</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

He hath made of us a royal priesthood for himself and his Father, as well as his dwelling place\*II Cor. 6:14-16.\*<sup>36</sup>

The reference here poses no problem, since it supports the statement made and the time element and the context are correct. It is used in the section, "Our Lord," and refers to Christ's work for his own.

### 4. II Cor. 6:16<sup>37</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

This is a quotation which illustrates very specifically the necessity of understanding the context in which any statement is made.

Therefore those who have been on the mount with Christ, who have seen the tabernacle with all its adornments, together with all that pertaineth thereto, even they and none other are able to know how to do the work to please him,\*II Cor. 6:16\* who shall dwell therein.<sup>37</sup>

34. To: Num. 27:18; upon: Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14. When Saul and David were anointed as kings, the Spirit of the Lord came upon them to qualify them for their important task, I Sam. 10:6, 10; 16:13, 14. (Berkhof, L., Systematic Theology, page 425.)

35. Acts 2:4, II Cor. 6:16; Acts 13:9; Rom. 8:11; I Cor 3:16; II Cor. 1:22; I Thess. 5:19; II Tim. 1:14.

36. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 21, Confession, page 26.

37. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 172, Confession,



Riedeman is speaking figuratively. "Those who have been upon the mount with Christ," refers to those who know Christ as God and Saviour and are members of his spiritual family. For the believer to "go up on the mount with Christ" is to come to Christ and learn of him and from him how to build his church (temple); the believer so doing is compared to Moses who went up on a mountain to receive instructions how to build the Tabernacle from Jehovah (Exodus 24:12-18). It is necessary to learn from the Head of the Church how to build it, in order to please him, "who shall dwell therein." In this quotation the verse presents no problems but must be understood from the pages surrounding it.

John 14:15-27 is the companion verse used with II Cor. 6:16, the reference being to Christ's exhortation to obedience (v.15) with the resulting promises of indwelling. It is similar in structure to II Cor. 6:14-7:1 because there is a command to obey with a promise following; II Cor. 6:17-18.

5. II Cor. 6:16-18<sup>38</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

The Rechenschaft author here expresses his hope that the vigorous persecution of the Catholics and Reformers will "not hinder the work that the Lord has begun in us through Christ," and relates four promises of help. One of these is the "I shall dwell among you..." (II Cor. 6:16-18). It is used correctly with Lev. 26:9-12 as part of the promises quoted.

6. II Cor. 6:16-18<sup>39</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

The citation in this instance involves Riedeman answering the anticipated question of an imaginary opponent on the subject of Christ's presence in the communion bread, whose argument runs:

...it is true that during the time of his (Christ) life he was not present everywhere. But now he is glorified; therefore he is present everywhere.<sup>39</sup>

Riedeman replies :

Herein it is truly clear enough that the humanity of Christ is in no more than one place. Even though, however, the divinity of Christ is universal and everywhere, it doth not follow therefrom that he desireth to be enjoyed and received in bread as a god.

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page 159.

38. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 165, Confession, page 153.

39. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 88, Confession, page 84.

But we truly confess that God, or the deity, extendeth (streckt) into all things that are created, into each as such: (in eine itzliche nach ihrer Mass, in Holz wie Holz...) into wood as wood, into bread as bread, into man,\*II Cor. 6:16-18\* whom he hath especially made a dwelling for himself, as man. Why, then, should one come to seek him, other than in the way mentioned, in bread; or in this bread other than in any other bread?<sup>39</sup>

It might appear at first glance that Riedeman is indulging in a bit of pantheism; in reality he is giving an excellent analogy to the effect that just as God does not show himself in wood or stone, but in man, therefore it should not be assumed he would show himself as bread, and why expect him in other created substances? No, rather God's instrument or medium is man.

### Separation

7. II Cor. 6:16-18<sup>40</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

The Rechenschaft indicates that Peter Riedeman must have read his Bible through many times, and though he was not free from errors of interpretation, he had a remarkable grasp of its content. When he wrote on any subject, a large number of his biblical references (applicable or not) seemed to come to his mind. This is illustrated by the numerous references in the paragraph below. Here begins a group of quotations under the heading 'separatism.'

Since the church is an assembly of the Children of God, as it is written,\*II Cor. 6:16-18\* 'Ye are the temple of the living God,' as God hath said, \*Lev. 26:9-13\* 'I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people,' \*Isa. 52:4-12\* 'Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be your father, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.'<sup>40</sup>

Here, quoted out of the Old Testament is the exact wording of the previously cited passage from Corinthians (actually 6:16b-18a+b). Not only did Riedeman know his Old and New Testaments well, but it is evident through this paragraph that he also knew the Old Testa-

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40. Riedeman (N. 2), Rechenschaft, page 35; Confession, page 38.

ment source of the II Cor. 6 passage. At this point Riedeman and Paul coincide in their use of the passage; a congregation ~~needs~~ to keep itself from the world and exercise self-discipline. The application by the two is the same, but it will be further shown that Riedeman uses the passage to justify the almost complete cessation of intercourse with the world, and to a far greater extreme than Paul, the author, or for that matter, Calvin, ever intended.

8. II Cor. 6:14-18<sup>41</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

Thus, we say and must confess, that not we but all baptizers of children have forsaken the Church and community of Christ and separated themselves from the same. They have fallen away, and are become so corrupt that they neither know nor recognize what the true Church of Christ is and in what way she proveth herself the Church of Christ. To which thing, if one ask them and tell them, they give the answer, "The saints did that, \*Acts 6:208, 7:55-60\* who had the Holy Spirit. But we are not able to do so." They know not that the Church of Christ is \*II Cor. 6:14-18\* a house of the Holy Spirit, and none is therein unless he hath the same, as also Paul saith, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."<sup>41</sup>

When Riedeman uses the term 'baptizers of children' in this paragraph, he is not intending an attack specifically on paedobaptists. The paragraph and the references, particularly the ones in Acts 6 and 7 referring to Stephen become confusing unless one takes the term to refer generally to all who are not Anabaptists, and who do not share Riedeman's views.

The phrase, 'the saints did that (the reference to Stephen) who had the Holy Spirit. But we are not able to do so' means that the early church had the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Some people to whom the Anabaptists witnessed in their travels admitted that they did not have the power the early Christians had. The reference to II Cor. 6:14-18 then makes sense. Riedeman tells us that certain people outside his circle were ignorant of the fact that the Church of Christ is a house of the Holy Spirit, who infuses life and power.

9. II Cor. 6:14-18<sup>42</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

This is the first of two references to II Cor. 6

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41. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 97, Confession, page 92.

in the section "Concerning the Temple..." The two sentences which open this section give a good summary of verses 14-18. The main idea is that the church is a temple, God desires to be honored there, and that there is an enormous gulph between the righteousness of God and the iniquity of the unregenerate world, Belial, and the temples of idols.

God the Lord hath built a temple for himself. That is his Church wherein he desireth to be honored, \*II Cor. 6:14-18\* and apart from it he desireth to plant the memory of his name neither here nor there - for the ceremonial semblance hath been brought to an end, and in Christ Jesus the real and true service of God hath begun...<sup>42</sup>

There is no specific problem in the use of the verse; however in a larger context, the overdrawn doctrine of the pure church appears. The companion verse I Cor. 6:12-20 - that immorality and the temple of the Holy Spirit have no relationship - fits well with the main passage II Cor. 6:14-18.

#### 10. II Cor. 6:15<sup>43</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

In the paragraph following the preceeding quotation, Riedeman describes how the "so called" church originated, referring to it as buildings of stone and wood. It is his opinion that these churches sprung up "when this country was forced by the sword to make a verbal confession of the Christian faith." Next he relates how the people (presumably in Germany, since he was imprisoned there at the time of the writing of the *Rechenschaft*)<sup>44</sup> dedicated temples to their gods, and made them 'churches! Then comes the quotation,

Thus, they originated through the instigation of the devil and are built up through sacrifice to devils, since as Paul saith, "The things that the heathen sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God; and I would not that ye should be in the fellowship of devils." For that is also not God's will, \*II Cor. 6:15\* for Christ hath no fellowship with Belial.<sup>45</sup>

This verse is used correctly in its connection with the heathen fellowship and devils. Recent scholarship by the Waldensian scholar Giovanni Mieggi in his

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42. Riedeman (N.2), *Rechenschaft*, page 98, *Confession*, pages 93-94.

43. Riedeman (N.2), *Rechenschaft*, page 99, *Confession*, page 94.

book *The Virgin Mary*<sup>45</sup> levels at the cult of Mary the accusation that it is simply another Mediterranean female deity comparable to Isis or Diana. It is no great problem to demonstrate the presence of idolatry in the Roman Church at the time of the Reformation. Riedeman would certainly want to assume "the assembly in the temple, however, is a rabble and gathering of whores and adulterers and of all unclean spirits"<sup>43</sup> and that from the origin of this illegitimate church, there have been no Christians in it. History would not go along with the Hutterite on this matter. He never mentions the possibility of a "righteous remnant" through the centuries. Therefore, the conclusion is that the reference is rightly used, but the implication is overdrawn.

11. II Cor. 6:14-16 (cf. above, page 47)

Four quotations from II Cor. 6 appear next in three consecutive paragraphs in the section, "How God Desireth to Have a People, Whom He Himself Hath Separated From The World and Chosen to be His Bride."

11. a. II Cor. 6:14-18<sup>46</sup>

12. b. II Cor. 6:15a<sup>47</sup>

13. c. II Cor. 6:15b<sup>48</sup>

14. d. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>49</sup>

References "a-c" center around the ideas in verses 14-15, i.e. the absolute contrast between believers and unbelievers. Reference "b" is concerned with the lack of accord between Christ and Belial. The ideas in "a," "b," and "c" that believers have nothing in common with unbelievers would and does lead to the conclusion which is expressed in the quotation of "d;" "Come out from among them and be ye separate."

44. Wolkan, Rudolph, Das grosse Gemeinde-Geschichtsbuch, Wien, 1923, page 167.

45. Miegge, Giovanni, Die Jungfrau Maria, übers. Kurt-Victor Selge, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962, page 72-73.

46. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 154, Confession, page 143.

47. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 155, Confession, page 144.

48. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 155, Confession, page 144.

49. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 155, Confession, page 144.

The companion verses of reference "d" (II Cor. 6:17-18) are worth noticing; for the "come out..." idea with its root in Tim. 52:11 is quoted. Rev. 18:4 in which the angel speaks of the judgment of Babylon is used along with the command, "come out of her, my people." It is a legitimate reference in that it refers to the same subject (coming out of) and for the same reasons (iniquity) but cannot be a valid reference here for the command "to come out," since it refers to something in the future.

All the references "a" though "d" are accurate as specifically applying to the situations mentioned.

15. II Cor. 6:16-18<sup>50</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

The next reference is related to the following

Now, if one will be reconciled with God and come back to God, \*Acts 2:36-40\* he must separate himself from such godless company, turn completely to the word of truth \*Titus 3:3-7\* and allow himself to be renewed by the same, \*Acts 2:38-39\* then will God be gracious to him again and \*II Cor. 6:16-18\* and accept him.<sup>50</sup>

"...he must separate himself from such godless company..." seems to be a natural reference for II Cor. 6:17, (come out...), but in reality its supporting biblical footnote is Acts 2:36-40. The Acts reference is out of context; it refers to the repentance and coming into the church of those who had never previously done so; the people mentioned in Acts 2 are Jews who are hearing the Gospel for the first time. It is certain, however, that Riedeman is referring to Christians who have strayed. This is clear because he mentions it in the previous sentence;

...it is certain that this is a heavy sin and a deep falling away from God. For it is to leave the community and fellowship of the saints and to surrender to the abominations of the heathen - this none can deny.<sup>50</sup>

Had he been careful, he would never have used this reference of Jews being converted to Christianity for the first time to refer to the return of a straying Christian. It is characteristic of Riedeman to give a biblical reference which superficially mentions a certain action or procedure, but which is otherwise out of context.

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50. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 161, Confession, page 149.

In the same manner, the reference to Titus 3:3-7 to the phrase "...and allow himself to be renewed by the same..." could be more precise. It refers to God's grace seeking the unconverted and renewing them for the first time, not those who are Christians and have fallen away. It is not at all clear to which group, the unconverted or backsliders, Riedeman is referring.

In the phrase, "...then will God be gracious to him again..." Riedeman consistently makes the same mistake. The reference is Acts 2:38,39. This is the same situation where Peter is counselling unconverted Jews to repent, not backslidden Christians.

The final phrase "...accept him" has a correct reference. It is II Cor. 6:16-18 where Paul refers to those whom God will receive back into fellowship.

16. II Cor. 6:15<sup>51</sup>

17. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>52</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

A discussion of II Cor. 6:15 would normally be out of place here, except that the next reference, II Cor. 6:17-18 occurs within a few lines of it.

Therefore it is, indeed, unfitting to set up this building with the unbelieving. That, then, is the reason we set up no church with the world.... For faith worketh righteousness through the hand of God, but unbelief, sin through the hand of the devil.\*II Cor. 6:15\* What concord hath then Christ with Belial, that their children should work together and build the Lord an house or dwelling? For John saith, "He that doeth right is of God. Whosoever committeth sin is of the devil." Therefore saith Paul,\*II Cor. 6:17-18\* "Go out from among them and be ye separate; and I will receive you and be your Father and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."<sup>51</sup> & 52

As the first line indicates, the topic is "...why the children of God cannot set up a church with the children of the world..." What Riedeman means by "children of the world" will be discussed in the next chapter. He is using both references to support his doctrine of separation. When the thought here is taken at face value, no problem exists. It is true that Christ neither has nor needs concord with Belial or his children, and Paul is very clear that the elements of iniquity, darkness, Belial, unbelievers, and any 'temple'

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51. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 178 Confession, page 164.

52. Riedman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 178, Confession, page 164.

of idols are foreign to the church. Therefore, Riedeman has not misused the verse in that he points out the need to exclude such ungodly elements; but he assumes anyone who does not fit into his very strict definition of the separated life should be cast out. The error comes in making the accusation of ungodliness at all outside the Anabaptist sphere. To maintain that all elements in the non-Radical Reformation were ungodly is not possible.

The only discrepancy between the English translation and the German text discovered thus far concerns II Cor. 6:17-18. In the German text, three more references are given; Lev. 26:11-12 (I will be your God, and you shall be my people); Isa. 52:7-12 (...go out from the midst of her...) and Rev. 18:4 (Come out of her, my people...) which is again quoted outside of its time sequence.

Finally Riedeman misappropriates this last verse by insisting on separation for reasons other than moral ones. It can also be shown that his definition of an unbeliever is too rigid and limited. He intends that people should separate from those who are not believers according to his standard.

#### 18. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>53</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

Thus we have brought forward, through the grace of God, the truth concerning the points which are most questioned in this land; firstly, \*II Cor. 6:17-18\* why God desireth to have a separate people, which is holy, blameless and unblemished and without spot or wrinkle; and how God himself divideth and separateth the devout from the evil, and also in the end will do.<sup>53</sup>

The reference given is in accord with the statement made; God desires a people holy to himself. II Cor 6:17-18 is appropriate here.

#### God The Father And His Children

Five references under this heading in the II Cor. passage are so close in meaning and use by Riedeman that it is possible to group them together.

#### 19. a. II Cor. 6:14-18<sup>54</sup>

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53. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 224, Confession, page 223.

54. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 12, Confession, page 19.



20. b. II Cor. 6:14-18<sup>55</sup>  
 21. c. II Cor. 6:16<sup>56</sup>  
 22. d. II Cor. 6:18<sup>57</sup>  
 23. e. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>58</sup>(cf. above, page 47 )

(a) "Therefore is God our Father and we his children" marks the first occasion of the references here pertaining to the Fatherhood of God. God's merciful acts toward unbelievers, the reaction of joy and the desire of the new creature in Christ to obey the Father because of his grace and love, are described in this section titled, "Our Father:"

(b) This reference has the companion verse Gen. 17:3-10, "God will make a covenant;" Lev. 26:9-13, "I will make a covenant;" Eze. 37: "Dry bones and covenant," and II Cor. 6:14-18; "I will be a father to you." II Cor. 6 is used with specific reference to covenant, though the word covenant is not mentioned.

(c) Reference "c" is given with regard to the simple statement, "that he should be our God, and we should be his people."

(d) is cited within the section "Man is grafted into Christ" and specifically within a discussion of the covenant "that he should be our God and we should be his people."

(e) This reference describes how God "uniteh in this way with man; that he desireth to be his God and Father, to care for him as a father for his son, yea, to give him everything in Christ." Here Riedeman has beautifully capture the spirit of God's plea to the wayward to return to him and let him act a true and gracious father to him. Ex. 29:43-46 is referred to - and is in the spirit and intent of II Cor. 6:17-18; Lev. 26:11-13 refers to the blessings of obedience, and is thus appropriate.

24. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>59</sup>(cf. above, page 47)

This reference to God as Father is of course cor-

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55. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 64, Confession, page 63.  
 56. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 64, Confession, page 63.  
 57. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 152, Confession, page 141.  
 58. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 201, Confession, page 185.  
 59. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 201, Confession, page 185.

rect, but Riedeman here states:

But what is a good conscience towards God other than that I know that I have a gracious God, who in Christ hath disregarded, remitted, and forgiven me all sins \*II Cor. 6:17-18\* and hath in Christ freely offered himself to me as Father..<sup>59</sup>

It is true that "Christ hath freely offered himself...as Father..." but Paul's setting of II Cor. 6 is somewhat different. In the above paragraph Riedeman tells how one has a good conscience, how one is certain of God's love; Paul's reference in II Cor. 6 is to repentance after sin - God will exercise his fatherly function in this case upon a condition - that the wayward child repents of wrongdoing and returns to the family. Paul and Riedeman are talking about two different things. The error is a small one indicating lack of precision.

25. II Cor. 6:17-18<sup>60</sup> (cf. above, page 47)

This reference to God as Father comes at the end of an intricate explanation by Riedeman on "...whence cometh this knowledge and good conscience...?" He is explaining that man is sure of his salvation and continual walk with God by virtue of three witnesses, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. "...whosoever suffereth this his work, hath with him God's testimony and, thus preserved, will be found\*II Cor. 6:17-18\* a son of God."<sup>60</sup> Riedeman is speaking of how one is sure of his faith. Paul is speaking of a disobedient Christian's repentance and return to a full relationship with God the Father. Riedeman is again imprecise in his reference to the verse.

### Conclusion

#### Verse

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|----|---------|---|
| 1. | 6:14-16 | The reference is oblique, but appropriate.  |
| 2. | 6:14-16 | a. Misinterprets God's likeness in man.<br>b. Fails to consider time element in interpretation. |
| 3. | 6:14-16 | Reference supports statement made.  |
| 4. | 6:16    | Reference is correct.   |
| 5. | 6:16-18 | Reference supports statement made.  |
| 6. | 6:16-18 | Reference supports statement made; he   |

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60. Riedeman (N.2), Rechenschaft, page 203, Confession, page 187.

- uses a good analogy.
7. 6:16-18 Reference supports statement made, but separatist ideas overstressed.
  8. 6:14-18 Reference supports statement made.
  9. 6:14-18 No specific problem with verse; doctrine of pure church overstressed.
  10. 6:15 Verse used correctly in its connection, but apparently does not believe in "righteous remnant."
  11. 6:14-18 Reference applies to situation mentioned.
  12. 6:15 Reference applies to situation mentioned.
  13. 6:15 Reference applies to situation mentioned.
  14. 6:17-18 Reference applies to situation mentioned.
  15. 6:16-18 The verse from Corinthians as used is correct; companion references misused with reference to time.
  16. 6:15 Correct as used, but separatism is overstressed.
  17. 6:17-18 Misuses this reference, insistent on separation for non-moral reasons.
  18. 6:17-18 Reference supports statement made.
  19. 6:14-18 Reference supports statement made.
  20. 6:14-18 Reference supports statement made.
  21. 6:16 Reference supports statement made.
  22. 6:18 Reference supports statement made.
  23. 6:17-18 Reference supports statement made.
  24. 6:17-18 Riedeman and Apostle Paul speaking of different things; the error indicates lack of precision.
  25. 6:17-18 Again Paul and Riedeman speaking of different subjects. Riedeman is imprecise.

Of the twenty-five times Riedeman makes reference to II Cor. 6:14-7:1, fifteen of the references are technically correct in supporting the statement made and present no problem. Six more references are used rightly, but have associated problems. These are: indirect reference to the situation, separatist ideas overstressed, doctrine of the pure church overdrawn, possibility of a "righteous remnant" ignored, a companion verse misquoted with reference to the time element, and the exclusion of anyone not in accord with his position. Thus, in these six references, separatism and the idea of the pure church are the categories which present a problem.

The remaining four times the text is referred to involve definite misunderstanding and misuse of the text. One concerns the *imago dei* with subsequent misunderstanding of the time element. In the next misinter-

pretation Riedeman insists on separation for reasons Paul does not give in the passage. The remaining two instances involve a lack of precision.

Of the thirty times the Corinthian passages are cited, Riedeman uses the passage correctly sixteen times. Eight more references are marginally correct, but involve problems, and the remaining six represent improper usage of the text.

### Calvin's Comments on the Text of II Corinthians 6

Calvin's definition of "yoked with unbelievers" helps define the core of the problems in both Corinthian passages.

For to be yoked with unbelievers means nothing less than to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness and to hold out a hand to unbelievers to signify fellowship with them.<sup>61</sup>

An essential difference between Calvin and Riedeman over the extent to which evil penetrates the world and daily life of the Christian becomes evident in the statement, "It is true that one sun shines on all of us we all eat the same bread and breathe the same air, and we cannot sever completely all connexion with them" <sup>62</sup> (the unbelievers). Calvin regards the "yoke of ungodliness...which Christians cannot lawfully share" <sup>63</sup> to occupy only a certain part of life in the world; Riedeman regards it broad enough to require the Christian to exclude himself from the world, as quickly as possible.

One who seeks to understand the differences in the interpretations should remember the fundamental cleavage between the two men is not so much over what is the nature of evil itself, as it is, how far does evil which exists penetrate our personal lives and surroundings. In his exegesis of verses 14-16 Calvin shows himself to be in complete agreement with Riedeman that an equal yoke, indeed any kind of yoke, with unbelievers is impossible for an obedient Christian. He would likewise agree that the distance between the five contrasts (righteousness and iniquity, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, believers and unbelievers, temple of God and idols) in verses 14-16 is infinite. They would have no problem in agreeing that this is what the scriptures are saying; the wall of disagreement arises over the

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61. Calvin, John, The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, tr. T.A. Smail, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1964, pages 90-91.
  62. Calvin (N.61), pages 89-90.

question where does righteousness end and iniquity begin in the life of the individual Christian and the Church. Is there a recognizable border to evil?

Calvin believes there are certain limits; Riedeman (to put words in his mouth) would say that evil is like water cascading from a dam just broken; it spreads over the land and continues to threaten all before it. Thus, separatism from the world, for him, is the high ground to which the world must flee.

If we repeat the analogy of water, Calvin's view would be more akin to: evil occupies certain lakes and swamps which the Christian must avoid. He is free in his Christian life to travel with ease in other areas. This is in accord with the statement of the Genevan Reformer in his exegesis of the connecting link between five contrasts. (what fellowship has...?).

But, of course, when Paul says that a Christian has nothing in common with an unbeliever he does not mean in such things as food and clothes or land or sun or air, as I have explained above, but is referring to these things that are the special properties of unbelievers and from which the Lord has separated us.<sup>64</sup>

Calvin's treatment of "I will dwell in them..." (verse 16b) agrees with the pattern suggested on pages 61 and 62 of this chapter.

He proves that we are the temples of God from the promise God once made to the people of Israel that He would dwell in their midst.<sup>65</sup>

Three things to keep in mind are (a) the Old Testament pattern of God "with: man, and the New Testament counterpart that God dwells "in" man; (b) Calvin considered the promise when given in the Old Testament to have a future fulfillment; (c) when Calvin refers to God dwelling within, he is speaking of Christians.

Calvin adds a new facet to our knowledge when he describes the relationship of the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament to God dwelling in man in the New Testament;

The symbol of this (dwelling among his people) was the ark....What was prefigured by the ark was manifested to us more fully in Christ, since He was made Immanuel for us.<sup>66</sup>

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63. Calvin (N.61), page 90.

64. Calvin (N.61), page 90.

65. Calvin (N.61), page 91.

Calvin applies the often used "separation" verse (17) saying that we who are redeemed should realize that we are not required to give up our life in order to leave uncleanness behind, but we are to avoid evil where it is active.

As he takes up verse 18, we see the seriousness with which he regards the reality of redemption; "It is no common honour for us to be reckoned among the sons of God...The thought of the great nobility He has conferred upon us ought to whet our desire for holiness and purity."<sup>67</sup>

Riedeman shows his greatest degree of seriousness when he is concerned with the pure church; Calvin, perhaps, when he contemplates in the light of his own redemption his responsibility to serve God and bring glory to Christ.

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66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., page 92.

"Finally there exists with us too the selfish and proud attitude arising out of a comparison of our understanding of the Scripture with the understanding of others. Invariably 'we' suggest that 'we' are right and that 'they' are wrong. Let us learn from the study of the Reformation struggle with its many shadows, that we need not perpetuate those shadows. Let us rather unite as people under God to take up anew the study of his word."

H. Poettcker ("Menno" Encounter With the Bible," MQR, 40:1966, page 126).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Basic Presuppositions

Opinions may differ on just how many "distinct presuppositions" are found in the Rechenschaft;<sup>1</sup> the aim

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1. The table of contents (Register) of the Rechenschaft will be found in the Appendix II For the reader to observe its design and content. The Rechenschaft is divided into two books. The first contains some ninety- one short articles or essays which occupy approximately three-quarters of the whole volume. After a forward (Vorrede) follow twenty-nine articles in which Riedeman explains "The Twelve Essentials of the Confession of Faith" (Folgen erstlich die 12 Hauptstuck der Bekanntnus des Glaubens). Here one observes a conscious effort to instruct and comment upon the Apostle's Creed. The middle section contains short essays on theological subjects such as doctrine, God, man, the devil, original sin, repentance, covenant baptism. Following this is found a discussion of items of a practical nature as marriage, government, clothes, swearing, greeting, singing, trading, drinking, education of children. The final one-fourth of the volume (Book II) consists of six long articles; (1) How God desireth...a people...separated...(2) How the house

is to examine in detail what Riedeman feels is vital. There are eight ideas so basic to his concept of God, the Church, and the World that if anyone were discarded or ignored, the relationship between the other seven would be much less clear.

### God: Truth and Power

Riedeman gives an indication of what we may expect from him in the Rechenschaft by his emphasis in the first few pages of two major attributes of God; power and truth. These are the kingpins of all his thought. The God of power is immediately set over against all falsehood.

His correlation of power and truth lie on the open surface in the five opening articles of Book I.<sup>2</sup> The frequent use of the term and its meaning indicate this. In the first article, "We Acknowledge God," reference to the power of God is made eleven times in one and a half pages. Of these eleven times, the word Gewalt<sup>3</sup> is used five.

In the second article, the title is "Almighty Father," but the subject centers around truth, untruth, deceit, falseness, disobedience, unbelief, perverseness, and crookedness. A direct reference to the "Almightiness" is not present. In less than two pages, terms such as these indicating a dynamic conflict between truth and error are used twenty-six times and constitute the thrust of the whole article.

God, who is eternal truth, is the enemy of all untruth and deceit, the enemy of all that hath a false, purely outward and feigned appearance.

(church) of the Lord should be built up in Christ, (3) Concerning the covenant of grace... (4) Concerning the supper of Christ... (5) Concerning swearing... (6) Concerning governmental authority. Much of the material in Book I is repeated here, but a more extensive treatment is given on the subjects dealt with. Even though the concept of separation is found throughout the whole book, the heart of Riedeman's argument for it lies in the first two articles of Book II.

2. Wir bekennen Gott / Den allmächtigen Vater / Unsern Vater / Der Himmel und Erden geschaffen hat / Wir glauben in unseren allmächtigen Vater.
3. It expresses here an active power which is unlimited in quantity and in its sphere of operation. The words used in the other cases are stark, Allmächtigkeit and Kraft, likewise meaning power.



Therefore he will not be named Father of those who are disobedient and believe not his word...<sup>4</sup>

The article, "Our Father" stays more to the point indicated in the title, relating what the Father has done in Christ; how he loves his children; and explains the relationship of the child to the Father. In article four, "Who Hath Made Heaven and Earth," God's role as creator is only mentioned twice; the theme of God's eternal power (Gottes ewige Kraft) and the perverseness of the disobedient is taken up again.

In the last article, "We Believe in God, Our Almighty Father," of the series, the general weakness (Schwachheit) of man is contrasted with the specific strength of God.

After we had looked around us in every direction, and found everything to be without strength and power, so that neither counsel nor help is to be found save in the one eternal and almighty God, in whom we found strength, power, might, glory,... ..It is not, however, as though we of ourselves are so strong, but we firmly and confidently believe that the power and strength which we have found in God hath overcome death, the world, sin, and the devil...<sup>5</sup>

God's Son also possesses power as a major attribute. He is called the Word proceeding forth from Truth and was "spoken by the Truth" and is named the Son.<sup>6</sup> This Son-Word is contrasted with the weakness of man:

A word which proceedeth from a man breaketh away from him because he is weak, but the word that proceedeth from God because of his strength, greatness and power remaineth forever and ever in him, ....one strength and one nature,...and without his strength can no one have being:<sup>7</sup>

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4. Riedeman, Peter, Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehr und Glaubens, von den Brüdern, so man die Hutterischen nennt, ausgangen 1565, Cotswold = Bruderhof, Ashton Kennes, Wilts, England, 1938, page 9.  
English Translation: Account of our Religion, Doctrine, and Faith, Given by Peter Riedeman, of the Brothers Whom Men Call Hutterians, tr. Kathleen E. Hasenberg, M.A., 1st Edition, Bungay, Suffolk, England. Printed for Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., by Richard Clay and Company, Ltd., 1950, page 16.
  5. Rechenschaft, pages 15-16; Confession, pages 21-22, (N.4).

Truth-power is engaged in perpetual conflict with untruth-evil:

the Father hath committed judgment unto the Son, who will come, and that right terribly, namely with flaming fire, to take vengeance upon all that is ungodly...<sup>8</sup>

Several other references are made to Christ's power. He is Lord because all power has been given to him.<sup>9</sup> Here it is linked to his victory over sin, which, as we know, is a most important theme. All those who "lie in word and deed" are anathematized.<sup>10</sup> An example of how the concern for truth appears in other parts of the Rechenschaft is in his discussion of how one is led into the church.

Now since the Church of Christ is the foundation and ground of truth, and the truth is built upon or entrusted<sup>11</sup> to her, none can or may come thereto, still less dwell and continue therein, except he live and walk in the truth, that is in God, and have the truth in him,...that from him it may shine and stream out like a light....the covenant of God's grace is a covenant of all the knowledge of God, as the word saith, "They shall all know me..."<sup>12</sup> (truth is a necessary part of knowledge). Therefore is the assembly of unjust and sinners...and all those who lie in word or deed, no church of God, and they belong not to him...<sup>13</sup>

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6. Rechenschaft, page 18; Confession, pages 24-25, (N.4).
  7. Ibid.
  8. Rechenschaft, page 28; Confession, page 32, (N.4). We should note that Riedeman always speaks with confidence. Doubt is non-existent in his writing. One reason for this is an absence of speculation in his thoughts; everything is black or white. His anti-intellectualism is also a contributing factor.
  9. Rechenschaft, pages 19-20; Confession, page 25, (N.4).
  10. Rechenschaft, pages 35-36; Confession, pages 38-39 (N.4).
  11. This phrase resembles a favorite Roman Catholic theme.
  12. Rechenschaft, pages 38-39; Confession, pages 40-41 (N.4). The concept of the Church as light will be discussed in succeeding pages.
  13. Rechenschaft, pages 35-36; Confession, pages 38-39.

It is not meant here that Riedeman is incorrect in the above statements; it is observed that truth and power are stressed almost to the exclusion of God's other attributes.

Riedeman deserves praise for his perception that the "likeness of God" in man is a spiritual one, and not physical.

We teach that God who is eternal truth, created and moulded man in his likeness, as he himself saith....Let none, however, be so foolish as to think that the Godhead is like flesh and blood or that flesh and blood is a likeness or similitude of the Godhead....The likeness of God, however, is from heaven and is heavenly....<sup>14</sup> "God," saith Christ, "is a Spirit" - not, however, a spirit of lying, but of truth, for which reason, as hath been saith, the likeness of God is not flesh and blood but spirit.<sup>15</sup>

His conclusion is then:

Now since man hath been created after this likeness and should bear this likeness, it is therefore God's will that he should not be carnally minded but spiritually minded.<sup>16</sup>

It is also to Riedeman's credit that he begins his Rechenschaft with the nature and knowledge of God; this is also Calvin's approach in the Institutes. For both then, theology starts with God; scripture is the vehicle of revelation of God.<sup>17</sup> The concern to place scripture first in a confession or systematic theology

(N. 4).

14. Rechenschaft, page 52; Confession, pages 52-53  
(N. 4).

15. Ibid.

16. Rechenschaft, page 53; Confession, page 53 (N.4).

17. Both Calvin's and Riedeman's theologies begin with God; it will be shown, however, that the final authority for Riedeman is not scripture, but the Holy Spirit who interprets the scripture. As a result of this, it is technically correct to say that Riedeman is an enthusiast. Riedeman remarks in an obscure place in the Rechenschaft that "scripture is written by the finger of God." Probably too much should not be made of this single remark, though today, it resembles what is unpopularly called the "dictation theory of inspiration."

came in later centuries with the rationalist attack.

The relationship between the concept of God in terms of power and truth and the focus of Anabaptist thought is an important one. J.J. Kiwiet sums it up:

We can state in a comprehensive way, that whatever their Christian wishes related to, they were not interested in theology, but the pure life and its essential center.<sup>18</sup>

If one's major concerns are (a) discipleship (b) practical application of Christian truths (c) discipline and (d) a pure church, what concept of God would be most consistent? Would it not logically be a God whose first attribute is truth (so that it may be known and followed) and whose second attribute is power (given in order that the followers may be able to obey). The God of power and truth would most naturally give knowledge and ability to his children. Other characteristics of God are not left out but the attributes of power and truth are much more emphasized. Beyond this similarity of the Hutterites' idea of God and their aims, we may observe that as their understanding of God and his creation was limited, so in a corresponding way, their concept of a church only in terms of light, was limited; and the stress on the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20) too narrow, in terms of Christ's other commands to the Christian in the world. "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13) would require them to be more a part of the surrounding world than they would care to be.

By placing ethical emphasis (which assumed it had the truth) before sound scholarship, the procedures by which the biblical message is arrived at were given a secondary role to the application of the truth. They were trying to apply (in some cases) truth they did not have in order to serve a God for whom they had too narrow a concept.

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18. Kiwiet, J.J. Pilgram Marbeck, sein Kreis und seine Theologie, Diss. Zürich 1955, page 16. He expressed the same idea on another page: "Dieses neue Leben in Christo, das also der Leitgedanke der täuferischen Bewegung ist, wird in der Gemeinde gepflegt....Das ganze Denken und Streben der Täufer konzentriert sich auf Christus und Seine Gemeinde, oder besser auf Nachfolge Christi und Bruderliebe," Ibid., page 17.

### Sin: Either Black or White

The Anabaptists have generally been grouped with the Pelagians in their anthropology,<sup>19</sup> and have usually been concerned to deny it. Riedeman's view that original sin is inherited would find agreement with Luther and Calvin.

For since all who are born in a human way inherit from Adam his nature and partake of his fellowship, that is, of sin...<sup>20</sup>

His identification of original sin with Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (II Cor. 12:7),<sup>21</sup> however, poses more of a problem. Such a correlation is very difficult to make because of the purpose of the "thorn." Calvin writes:

this is the second reason for his forbearance, that God, wishing to restrain every sign of insubordination in him (Paul), subdued him with a rod.<sup>22</sup>

If this is the purpose, then it would hardly follow that God had given original sin to subdue Christians and make them more obedient.

The salvation of man: tension between two poles.

Two strains of thought can be noticed in Riedeman: (a) man can be saved only with the help of God (quite in agreement with Eph. 2:1-9) and yet participates in his salvation, (b) but once man has become regenerate, it is possible for him to undo all this by disobedience - a unique idea - in that his previous statement about the helplessness of man to effect his own salvation is identical with that of Calvin! For purposes of definition (and taking the terms of definition partly from a later century), he is "Calvinistic" up to the point of regeneration and "Arminian" after the new birth. It could be said that he resembles or anticipates Arminian and Wesleyan theology in his view of the Christian's relationship to God after regeneration has occurred.

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19. Ludemann, H., Reformation u. Taufertum in ihrem Verhältnis zum christlichen Prinzip, page 87.
  20. Rechenschaft, page 79; Confession, page 77 (N.4).
  21. Rechenschaft, page 57; Confession, page 57 (N.4).
  22. Calvin, John, The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, tr. T.A. Smail, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1964, page 158.

The situation of man prior to the spiritual rebirth is described as a "temple laid waste, desecrated and broken through the counsel of the serpent,"<sup>23</sup> having "no goodness apart from that which He (God) alone worketh in us...in so far as it is our work, is naught but sin,"<sup>24</sup> and "thus, it is the Spirit of Christ and not man that leadeth us to the Church."<sup>25</sup> For man's salvation "a power other than human strength was necessary."<sup>26</sup>

to humble ourselves before him, as those who of themselves can do nothing; for we can do nothing, not even promise to do something of ourselves... let alone swear to do it.<sup>27</sup> But such obedience is not the work of men, but of God, and this work we find in ourselves.<sup>28</sup>

It may be said in conclusion "no one can come to him, except the Father draw him...only they whose heart God the Lord doth touch and whose spirit he doth awaken ...."<sup>29</sup> and to quicken whom he will and to give of his fullness to whomsoever and in what abundance he will.<sup>30</sup>

Actually, there is a tension in Riedeman's view about the salvation of man. His strongly worded statements concerning man's inability to save himself are placed over against ideas whose direction seems to indicate man's redemption has something of the nature of a business transaction.

True and well-founded faith, however, is not of men but a gift of God, and is given only to those who fear God.<sup>31</sup>

This position embraces the two poles of Riedeman's thought; the problem is that of faith which is described as a gift is obtained by meeting certain conditions and ceases therefore to be a gift.<sup>32</sup> In the following, he is even more clear about the transaction man makes in order that the Holy Spirit may do his work;

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23. Rechenschaft, page 166; Confession, page 154 (N.4).
  24. Rechenschaft, page 32; Confession, pages 35-36 (N.4).
  25. Rechenschaft, page 39; Confession, pages 41-42 (N.4).
  26. Rechenschaft, page 17; Confession, page 23 (N.4).
  27. Rechenschaft, page 124; Confession, page 117 (N.4).
  28. Rechenschaft, page 21; Confession, page 26 (N.4).
  29. Rechenschaft, page 170; Confession, page 157 (N.4).
  30. Rechenschaft, page 18; Confession, page 23 (N.4).
  31. Rechenschaft, page 44; Confession, page 46 (N.4).
  32. This should not be objected to on the grounds that such an action never becomes a "business transac-

If the word is heard and the same believed, then faith is sealed with the power of God, the Holy Spirit, who immediately reneweth the man and maketh him live (after he had been dead in sin)<sup>33</sup>... Then we say, to help to raise a fallen man we do not regard as wrong, if he is ready to let himself be raised....Now, all who respond to this and sacrifice themselves completely to God and allow him, that is the Holy Spirit, to work in them and drive them into new life...<sup>34</sup>

Man can undo his relationship to God by disobedience.

It may be seen just how rigid Riedeman's categories are and to what extent he is governed by the pre-suppositions of the pure church in his answer to the question "who is (or can be) a Christian?" Once men are saved by God's grace, they are evaluated very strictly by their deeds; the permanency of man's relationship to God depends on his behaviour. Sometimes there is no difference in his thought between the unregenerate and the Christian if certain sins have been committed. The similarity with the Reformers extends only up to the point at which the Christian life begins. There now appears the concept that sin in the life of the Christian can, in certain instances, destroy the relationship with God.

Peter Riedeman is so firm in his conviction that conduct determines whether or not one is a Christian, that those (a) who are immature in their Christian life, or (b) have a different persuasion as to the nature of their conduct, or (c) are aware of more freedom in Christ than he, are automatically assumed to be non-Christians; the remedy is for them to repent and "dedicate themselves to God."

The method by which one remains a Christian is connected with the process by which one becomes a Christian. The Rechenschaft presents only one way; man must repent and surrender completely to God. He means by

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tion" if a person receiving the gift is already a son (i.e. if one is a son, he has no more conditions to meet). The whole point is that the gift of faith makes (from God's side) one a son and he is unable to fear and reverence the Father until he is a son! The gift governs the status of the receiver (if he fears God, he is already a son!).

33. Rechenschaft, page 81; Confession, page 78 (N. 4).

34. Rechenschaft, page 160; Confession, pages 148-149 (N. 4).

this that if a person is not ready and willing to surrender all at the point of conversion, they are no Christian. A problem of major proportions is encountered; there is no room for growth in the life of a new Christian. Riedeman gives regeneration such a prominent position that in effect, sanctification becomes swallowed up in it. The person who can satisfy Riedeman's terms of regeneration will have little sanctification left to undergo! This is not unexpected. The problems of discipline and forgiveness of the disobedient in the life-long process of sanctification are neatly solved when one can simply call the wayward a "non-Christian." Immediate dedication and strict obedience take the place of sanctification. Such an idea is more consistent with and congenial to the concept of a pure church. For example, one who dresses ostentatiously cannot be a Christian.

Thus is such decoration and zeal for the same not only an adornment of Christians, but, on the contrary, a proof of the non-Christian (ein Beweisung der Unchristen).<sup>35</sup>

We still regard the wearing of unduly expensive clothing as vanity, but this does not make the wearer a non-Christian. Certain deeds are so offensive to him that he is unable to conceive of a Christian exhibiting anything but exemplary behavior.<sup>36</sup>

Indeed it appears that Riedeman puts something which resembles sanctification before conversion. He does not label it as such, calling it "counting the cost" (Lk. 14:27-33).

He (Abraham) had to circumcise them on the eighth day, however, and not as soon as they were born.. ..So also God desireth in the house of Christ that before one maketh such a covenant with him, he should grow to some extent in faith and knowledge,

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35. Rechenschaft, pages 144-145; Confession, page 134 (N. 4).

36. Ibid. In this case, the wearing of gold chains and fine clothing; outward magnificence and ornament. A curious exception in the case of outward ornament is that "he who previously made such clothing ...before he came to a recognition of the truth does not sin thereby if he layeth aside its misuse and permitteth not such outward adornment to be a hindrance to him in striving for divine adornment." Rechenschaft, page 145, Confession, page 135.



that each may know what he doeth. This Christ testified... "There is none who intendeth to build a house or tower..."<sup>37</sup>

One of the charges Riedeman frequently makes against those who violate his ethical presuppositions is "whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God"<sup>38</sup> (II John 1:9). He says that one who does not have the doctrine of Christ is a person, for example, who is a government official or wears ostentatious clothing. Riedeman describes it as "while one is unfaithful to the Church he is also without God and Christ."<sup>39</sup>

The use of II John 1:9 here illustrates his method of using a verse to support a point which is out of context and related only by similarity of subject. John is referring to gnosis,<sup>40</sup> not ethics and disobedience. John makes reference to a specific type of individual, a deceiver who aggressively spreads a false doctrine of Christianity, saying that Jesus did not come in the flesh. The "anyone" (tis) of verse 10 refers to this person. This verse, then, cannot refer to an ordinary disobedient believer.

An example of his thinking concerning disobedience comes in his statement, "all who cleave to created things and forsake them not for Christ's sake are not Christians."<sup>41</sup>

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37. Rechenschaft, page 199; Confession, page 183 (N.4). Riedeman has trapped himself in his own system at this point. Is this person who is "growing in faith" already a Christian (before he has made the total surrender)? If not, how can he be growing in faith? There are instances where people in the Gospels were called to consider the cost (the rich young ruler).
  38. Rechenschaft, page 161; Confession, page 150 (N.4). But could it even be loosely said they were growing in faith? (no) They had come to the point where they were about to have faith, but not yet. The consideration of the cost of following Christ would definitely come before one had become a Christian from all Riedeman's other statements.
  39. Rechenschaft, page 161; Confession, page 150 (N.4).
  40. Schneider, Johannes, "Die Katholischen Briefe," 2 Johannes 7-11, NTD, Bd. 4, page 192. "sondern ihre eigene Gnosis vortragen.... Die Lehre Christi ist der einzige Masstab für die Beurteilung kirchlicher Lehraussagen."
  41. The scripture that Riedeman refers to is Mt. 19: 27-30, the statement of the Apostle Peter "we have left everything and followed you, what then shall

We have seen that in Riedeman's view it is not possible for one who serves the government to be a Christian; it is a sin which removed him from any relationship to the church. Likewise, that a person who wears jewels or fine clothing cannot be a Christian. The third example is the disconnecting power of sin in marriage. Riedeman states that he regards marriage as permanent,

in accordance with God's will and order, and therefore neither leave nor forsake the other but suffer both ill and good together all their days.<sup>42</sup>

In spite of Riedeman's conviction being so firm, he would maintain that sin can break even this relationship. Marriage, presented in a theocratic frame of reference, is for him divided into three grades or rungs:<sup>43</sup>

- a. marriage of God with the soul and the spirit.
- b. marriage of the spirit with the body.
- c. marriage of one body with another<sup>44</sup> "that is,

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we have?" Christ's answer would certainly please Riedeman: "in the new world, when the Son of Man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones..." verse 28.

42. Rechenschaft, page 103; Confession, page 98 (N.4).
43. "Die Ehe aber steht in dreien Graden und Staffeln"; Rechenschaft, page 103; Confession, page 98 (N.4).
44. The uniqueness of his thought is apparent here; the three grades are based on three unrelated passages of scripture: with (a) he refers to I Cor. 6:17; "But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him." The illustration of marriage as a picture of Christ's relationship to the Church (Eph. 5:21-23) is an important one, but there is no implication of ranks or steps in marriage, other than that of the ultimate reality (Christ and the Church) and its copy, human marriage. There is certainly no warrant for three grades between the passage from I Cor. 6 and the other two which Riedeman cites: for him, marriage of spirit with body finds its reference in Gen 2:7: "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." This account of the creation of man does not even remotely imply anything on marriage. The reference of marriage of one body to another comes from Mal.2:10-16 and is an exhortation to the men of Israel to stop divorcing their Hebrew wives in

man with woman; which is not the first, but the last (grobeste Grad) and lowest grade, and therefore visible..."<sup>45</sup>

The placing of marriage, as we know it, on a lower level is consistent with the reluctance of the Anabaptists in general to avoid worldly and human responsibilities. Riedeman advises, in effect, that young men contemplating marriage should not trust the will of the flesh, but ask counsel of and accept the decision of the elders concerning the choice of a partner.<sup>46</sup>

The breaking of marriage comes about by a neglect of the three grades, beginning with the first which is severed when the husband

...preserve not his honor as the glory of God and go before his wife and guide her to blessedness, he hath already broken the marriage with his wife, and if he breaketh it thus with his wife, he soon sinneth in the next grade, namely against his spirit, for he alloweth himself not to be ruled by it but by the flesh, and becometh superficial and forsaketh his lordship; if, however, his spirit is overcome and weakened by the flesh, he falleth in the third grade and breaketh his union with the Creator by whom he is led.<sup>47</sup>

When a wife acts without the counsel of her husband (and he permits her) he sins with her "as Adam did

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order to marry Gentile ones. Riedeman's referring to the Hebrew husbands' misuse of marriage as grounds for the establishment of a "third rung" in a scheme of Christian marriage shows how energetically he is pressing forward his presuppositions. His three rungs reflect a paste and scissors method of construction of three unrelated and invalid ideas. It should be noticed that Riedeman has not "thrown out the Old Testament," a charge frequently brought against the Anabaptists. He uses it frequently wherever it suits his purpose.

45. Rechenschaft, page 103; Confession, page 98 (N.4).  
 46. This is both a useful and harmful course of action. On the one hand, advice from older persons who have a genuine interest in the welfare of the young man is desirable. On the other hand, it can delay maturity which should come through making important decisions. Some regard the lack of enough maturity to make a wise choice of partner as indicative of a lack of maturity to go through the marriage successfully.  
 47. Rechenschaft, page 107; Confession, page 101 (N.4).

with Eve...for they broke marriage with their Creator."<sup>48</sup> Under the influence of his extremely serious view of the effects of sin, he would regard a marriage as broken whereas others would say disobedience had occurred.

Would not the result be better described as the breaking of a communion with God, while the basic relationship (union) remains? An indication of God's attitude toward Adam and Eve is his provision for them of garments of skin, clothing them, after they had sinned (Gen. 3:21).

The final indication of Riedeman's overemphasis of the disconnecting power of sin is seen in his view that it is possible through disobedience for a man to commit adultery with his own wife. Such a possibility, according to Riedeman, comes "where one of the partners go to another man or woman." If this takes place the other should put the partner away and have nothing more to do with them until repentance is evident. If the innocent partner "mixes with the transgressor before they have repented, he committeth adultery with him."<sup>49</sup>

### The Two Covenants; Slavery and Sonship

The early appearance of this presupposition is noteworthy, following almost immediately his discussion of God the Father<sup>50</sup> and sin, and shows itself to be one of the most basic presuppositions; this is because in its entire history, the church has never been unanimous in its understanding of the relationship between the two covenants. This is especially true since the Reformation. The old covenant is greatly inferior to the new, says the Hutterite leader, in that "it was given to Israel without the pouring out of the Spirit of Grace<sup>51</sup> (ohne Austeilung des Gnadengeists geben

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48. Rechenschaft, page 107; Confession, page 102 (N.4).

49. Rechenschaft, page 108; Confession, page 102 (N.4). Another alternate to this course would be the example suggested by the long-suffering and patient Hosea, whose wife Gomer was a harlot. Though Hosea's heart was broken, the marriage was not. He was able to forgive and win her back while she remained unrepentant. Frankly, it must be said that Riedeman's ideas of separation from those whom he regards as sinners are different from the attitude of Hosea. From the point of biblical interpretation, it would be difficult to maintain here that the Old Testament is to be rejected as a guide to ethical action over against the New Testament doctrine of love. Hosea's attitude is parallel to the

ist)." The Holy Spirit alone is the vehicle by which the new covenant of grace is brought to the Christian, performing the function of revealing, sealing, and establishing the new covenant.<sup>52</sup> As a result of the absence of the Spirit of Grace, "the heart was not changed by all this, and the people remained the same old people..."<sup>53</sup> Riedeman has other objections to the old covenant, but he regards this one as having the gravest consequences. It is not difficult to see how the existence of a group of people, with what he calls the "unchanged heart" would pose a serious problem to his view of the pure church. The necessity of a person being a new creation in Christ (according to his understanding of that term)<sup>54</sup> is a predominant theme.

Because the people of Israel in the old covenant "remained the same old people," he regards the old covenant not as a testament of sonship, but of servitude; he repeats this phrase many times.

Now because the heart was not changed by all this, and the people remained the same old people, it was no testament of sonship, but one of servitude, as indeed Paul doth term it, when he speaketh of the two covenants in the terms of two women saying, The covenant from Mount Sinai gendereth to bondage and is in bondage with her children.... yet it is the bringing in of something better and more perfect.<sup>55</sup>

In his amplification of the statement, he says that because the new covenant is more clearly and perfectly revealed, having been brought more fully into the light, "that which is dark and imperfect must cease and come to an end." The theme of light reappears; it will be seen later as his primary characterization of the church. His second reason for rejecting the old covenant is that those under it did not know God;

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ideas in I Cor. 13:7,8 "There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, hope, and its endurance, love will never come to an end" (New English Bible).

50. Riedeman's presupposition concerning Christ is dealt with in the section on hermeneutics.
51. Rechenschaft, page 65; Confession, page 64 (N.4).
52. Rechenschaft, page 65; Confession, page 64 (N.4).
53. Ibid.
54. From the section on sin, one sees that his definition of a Christian is very narrow.
55. Rechenschaft, page 65; Confession, page 64 (N.4).

This covenant is a covenant of the grace, the revelation and the knowledge of God.... This knowledge, however, cometh alone from the receiving of the Holy Spirit.<sup>56</sup>

The difficulties which Riedeman raises for his position by maintaining an absolute difference between the old and new covenants give rise to the following questions: (a) What is the status in the Old Testament of such people as Noah, Abraham, Moses and the "great cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) i.e. the numerous Old Testament figures who did not, according to Riedeman, have the same relationship to God in Christ which the apostles and the early church had? (b) What is God's original intention in establishing the old covenant and then moving (in a connected or disconnected way) to the new covenant? (c) Does the structure and content of the Old and New Testaments contribute anything more to the picture which Riedeman presents?

There is a very definite difference between the two covenants as mentioned in Gal. 4:12-26. "Paul," says Riedeman, "doth term it when he speaketh of two covenants in the terms of two women saying, the covenant from Mount Sinai gendereth to bondage, and is in bondage with her children."<sup>57</sup> There is no problem with the idea that those who attempt to achieve righteousness through the law are doomed to failure. He discusses only one of the two covenants mentioned in the allegory of Sarah and Hagar and their sons, Isaac and Ishmael. From Gal. 4:24 though, we can definitely state that Sarah and her son Isaac represent "another" covenant.<sup>58</sup> This other covenant is not referred to as the "Sarah-covenant" but "Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother" (v. 26). Riedeman lists the two covenants in this manner: (a) the Hagar-Mount Sinait covenant, under which no man obtains righteousness and (b) the new covenant

...of the grace, the revelation and the knowledge

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56. Rechenschaft, pages 69-70, 214-215; Confession, pages 67, 196-197 (N.4). This discussion is based on Jer. 31:34 and is found also in Heb. 8:6-12. Riedeman cites both.

57. Rechenschaft, page 65; Confession, page 64 (N.4).

58. "Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar."  
"Ihr steht Sara, die freie Ehefrau Abrahams, gegen über, in deren Person die Mutter der Gläubigen des neuen Bundes versinnbildlich ist." (Kittel, G., "Hagar", Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testa-

of God, as the word signifieth, "They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest." This knowledge, however, cometh alone from the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Thus the covenant of God is confirmed by Christ, sealed and established by the Holy Spirit...<sup>59</sup>

Riedeman places a time limitation on the second "Jerusalem covenant." In his view, those mentioned in Heb. 11 as heroes of the faith are outside this covenant because first of all, they did not live in New Testament times; secondly, they had no knowledge of God in the way in which Christians in the New Testament did; and thirdly, they are not "sealed and established by the Holy Spirit as is promised in Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-21.

Riedeman appears to have overlooked certain matters concerning the position of many Old Testament characters in the covenant of redemption. There is much biblical evidence indicating that those under the old covenant who walked before God in a manner pleasing to him<sup>60</sup> received full justification or forgiveness, though the revelation of it was not as complete or clear until the time of Christ (Ps. 32:1,2,5; 51:1-3,9-11; 103:3-12; Isa. 43:25; Rom. 3:3,6-16; Gal. 3:6-9).<sup>61</sup> Christ does make atonement for sin and meets for them the demands of the law. An examination of the relationship between God and those believers shows no essential difference with that of believers in the New Testament.<sup>62</sup> In his

ment, Bd. 1, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1932, page 56)  
59. Rechenschaft, page 69; Confession, pages 67-68 (N. 4).

60. For example, David, who is called a man "after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22) and the lesser known Zechariah and wife Elizabeth who were both righteous before God, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Lk. 1:6).

61. These reflect a consistent theme throughout the whole Old Testament and are not isolated verses, after the method of Riedeman.

62. The problems in this area posed by the serious consideration of the Transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:1-9) are generally avoided by the Anabaptists.

Pilgram Marbeck (ca. 1495-1556), the South German counterpart of the Northern Dutch Menno Simons, had ideas very similar to Riedeman, on the old and new covenants. Marbeck begins his discussion by relating how "Adam bekam ein äusserliches Gebot...und wurde von ihm ein äusserliches Gehorsam gefordert." He calls the eleventh chapter of

explanation of the two covenants, Riedeman says the new covenant did not take effect until Christ came and those in the Old Testament are excluded.

### The Church: A Light in the Darkness

The Church...is the basis and ground of truth, a lantern of righteousness in which the light of grace...held before the whole world, that its darkness, unbelief and blindness be thereby seen and made light....the Church of Christ in the first place completely filled with the light of Christ as a lantern is illuminated and made bright by the light.<sup>63</sup>

The small amount of space used to discuss the es-

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Hebrews a group of examples of "dieser rein äusserlichen Religion....Im Neuen Bund ist Gott aber zuerst der 'innerliche' Gott, der sich ein innerliches oder geistliches Volk auserwählt hat." Salvation, according to Marbeck, is "der innerliche Bund mit Gott, der schon durch Jeremia vorhergesagt worden, aber im A.T. noch nicht im geringsten Grade dagewesen war. 'Nit ain spitzlin hab gestern yemandt von disem verhaissnen Testament Jesu Christi empfangen,' There is no valid relationship with God in the Old Testament for him because "alles innere Leben im A.T. sich auf äusserliche natürliche Sachen richtete."

The terms "zeitlich" and "ewig" are important for Marbeck. The faith of those in the Old Testament was "ein Glaube der natürlichen, unwiedergeborenen Menschen....Der wahre geistliche Glaube kommt erst durch die Wiedergeburt vom Heiligen Geist."

Another pair of ideas which Marbeck uses is "Figur" and "Wesen." Almost everything that took place in the Old Testament happened in figure (allegory); "...das Volk Israel war ein Bild des neuen Gottesvolkes. Israel wurde zwar auch schon das Volk Gottes genannt, aber das war nur 'wegen der Figur.' In jeder Hinsicht war das alte Volk nur ein Abbild des neuen und wesentlichen Gottesvolkes. Der Unterschied ist ebenso radikal wie der Unterschied vom Figur und Wesen. Die Figur kann nicht die Figur sein. Im Alten Bund gab es nur eine natürliche Geburt zur Knechtschaft, wie es im Neuen Bund eine Geburt vom Heiligen Geist..." (J.J. Kiwiet, Pilgram Marbeck, sein Kreis und seine Theologie, Diss. Zürich, 1955, pages 94-98).

63. Rechenschaft, pages 36-37; Confession, pages 39-40



sence of the church (six pages)<sup>64</sup> is all out of proportion to its importance. Perhaps Riedeman felt it necessary to give only these brief thoughts because the activities and mission of the church is so frequently a part of his discussion in other areas. Throughout the *Rechenschaft* he discusses at length how people come into the church, and the life afterwards; many of the biblical images of the church are present. All however, are subordinate to the one he stresses in the section, "What the Church Is." The biblical image of the church primarily as light says a great deal; it will limit and describe his understanding not only of the essential nature of the church, but of its most important function and mission. Confining one's understanding of the nature of the church to so limited an avenue is as important for what it fails to include as what it asserts.

P.S. Minear has catalogued over one hundred cognate expressions by which the church may be described. Most of them are capable of being set under ten categories:<sup>65</sup> (1) saints and sanctified, (2) believers and faithful, (3) slaves and servants, (4) the people of God, (5) kingdom and temple, (6) household and family, (7) the new exodus, (8) vineyard and flock, (9) one body in Christ, (10) the new humanity.

Since Riedeman makes such a point about the covenant of sonship being superior to the sonship of slavery, he would most likely find the image of the church as "slaves and servants" (3) distasteful; "household and family" (6), though it is touched upon, is dealt with in a specific manner because of its similarity with the *oikos* formula which supports the side of the Reformers on matters of infant baptism.

The verses he cites in this section are typical of his method of interpretation: His citing of Eph. 3:14-21 as a reference to the idea that "men may also learn to see and know the way of life" is out of context; Riedeman is talking about the "world in darkness and unbelief" coming to know Christ; Paul is referring to the strengthening of Christians already in the church.

The use of Matt. 4:8-11 with reference to the light of Christ shining through the church to others is misplaced. Verses 8-11, the temptation of Christ, have nothing to do with this. The next reference, Matt. 4:15 in the same section is more to the point. A small but interesting discrepancy occurs with the citing of

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(N. 4).

64. *Rechenschaft*, pages 35-41; *Confession*, pages 38-44 (N. 4).

65. Minear, Paul S., "The Idea of the Church," *IBD*, vol. I, pages 607-617.

Mark 4:14-25 and Luke 8:9-21. Both passages advise that a lamp be placed, not under a cover, but upon a stand to give maximum illumination. The Luke passage (verse 16) states it is to be placed upon a stand that those who enter may see the light. The thought for which Riedeman cites the passage is "its (the lantern of Christ) brightness and light shineth out into the distance to give light to others still walking in darkness..."<sup>66</sup> The next verse cited further in the paragraph Matt. 5:14 ("A city set upon a hill cannot be hid"), would have been more appropriate to the idea of "a light shining in a distance." Such impreciseness is normal for the Hutterite because he is not concerned with careful exegesis, but only matching idea with idea. Little discrepancies such as this occur regularly throughout the Rechenschaft.

Riedeman's basic idea of a church shows an intimate relationship to the previously mentioned concept of God. In this connection, the role of Christ as light bearer is included; "that he might lighten and make bright the darkness in which we were bound."<sup>67</sup> God, who is truth and power, expressed that truth through the church ("the church of Christ is the basis and ground of truth").<sup>68</sup> The essential function of the church is to express God's righteousness the way a lantern gives light; (the church is) "a lantern of righteousness"<sup>69</sup> which illuminates the darkness in which the unredeemed world is groping. This "lantern of Christ" emits the light of the knowledge of God, sending it "out into the distance to give light to others still walking in darkness."<sup>70</sup>

After the fashion of an outward light shedding "a ray or beam" (das materliche Licht, einen Strahl und Schein) likewise a divine light, whenever it has been let into a man gives forth its divine ray and beam (das

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66. Rechenschaft, page 37; Confession, page 40 (N. 4).  
 67. Rechenschaft, page 18; Confession, page 24 (N. 4).  
 68. Rechenschaft, page 36; Confession, page 38 (N. 4). Riedeman's final source of authority lies in the Spirit working through the church rather than exclusively in the scripture which is a Reformed idea. This tends toward enthusiasm.  
 69. Rechenschaft, page 37; Confession, page 40 (N. 4). Riedeman's exact phrase in the German uses three words to describe the lantern: "Die Kirchen Christi ist ein Pfiment (Fundament) und Grundfeste der Wahrheit, ein Ampel, Lichtstar und Lucerne der Gerechtigkeit." The "Ampel" is an old-fashioned hanging lamp; "Lichtstar" is a star giving light rays, and a "Lucerne" is a very old word for lantern.  
 70. Rechenschaft, page 37; Confession, page 40 (N. 4).

göttliche gibe den Strahl und Schein). The ray which the church sends forth is a light of true divine rightness, brightness and truth. "Thus the Church of Christ continues to be a pillar and ground of truth..."<sup>71</sup> The figure described makes the church appear to be a sort of spiritual lighthouse shining bright rays of truth into the dark night of the world's life without Christ.<sup>72</sup> With this limited concept of the church before the reader one has the feeling that Riedeman's description of the essence of the church should have included more. The church's chief function here is little more than a "truth-propagation center." In conclusion, Riedeman is correct in presenting the church as a vehicle of light; he should have balanced it more with the other categories. His emphasis, for whatever may be said for or against it, is consistent in its limitation with the concept of God. Limitation of themes which are actually more broad and comprehensive is characteristic of him.

#### Calvin: A Brief Comparison

God...who accomodates knowledge of himself to man.

Riedeman's approach when compared to Calvin's appears to be more direct and simple. He begins immediately to describe God, emphasizing the two attributes of truth and power, while only mentioning others. Calvin, being more sophisticated, starts with a discussion of how God reveals himself,<sup>73</sup> saying that God chooses to reveal selective aspects of himself. The instrument He uses with Moses is that of an image, and that which He revealed was "whatever was right for men to know about him."<sup>74</sup> Moses, Calvin, says, describes Jehovah as a merciful and gracious God, patient, compassionate, true and one who takes away sin. In Ex. 34, two important attributes are eternity and self-existence. Riedeman says, "God, who is truth and power..." Calvin says, "He is shown to us not as He is in himself, but as He is toward us, so that this recognition of him consists more in living experience than in ...speculation,"<sup>75</sup> im-

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71. Ibid.

72. Cf. the comparison in the concepts of evil between Calvin and Riedeman, pages 62-64.

73. A theme which the Calvin scholar, E.A. Dowey, treats extensively in his well known The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology, New York, Columbia, 1952 (Diss. Zürich, 1952).

74. Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. J.T. McNeill, tr. F.L. Battles, vol. I, LCC, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1960, 1.10.2.

75. Ibid.

plying in contrast to Riedeman, that there is much unknown of God. Both heaven and earth know of his kindness, goodness, mercy, justice, judgment and truth. The attributes of "power and might" (cf. Riedeman) are contained under the title Elohim.<sup>76</sup> If Calvin were asked to set forth main attributes, they would be mercy, judgment, justice. When one understands these, "he has abundant reason to glory in God."

Riedeman has slanted the picture of God toward "untruth-power" in order that he may place him over against his opposite qualities, "untruth-evil." The conflict of light-darkness, untruth-evil bears a resemblance to and is consistent with the limited concept of the church as light. Calvin simply talks about God as God, without placing him over against anything. Most of the attributes Calvin mentions are ones which are advantageous to the believer.

#### Sin: Growth Toward Perfection.

A comparison has already been noted between Calvin and Riedeman on the point of original sin. It has also been mentioned that in his understanding of salvation, Riedeman resembles Calvin. We should note that the point at which the thinking of Riedeman and Calvin diverge is the large and important area of ethics. One of the most significant areas in which the Anabaptists and Reformers disagreed was over the matter of how the Christian life was to be lived. If it is possible to express the difference briefly, we could say that Calvin regarded the life of the Christian after regeneration as an upward climb, full of dangers, snares and one in which a few mistakes were bound to be made. Calvin's eye was focused toward the Christian in the fellowship of the church, and how to help him be a stronger, more mature and more effective Christian. Discipline was of course necessary. Riedeman's attention was primarily directed toward the preservation of a pure church; the members would have to conform to the rigid standards, coming from his inadequate interpretation, at whatever cost. The purity of the church was a hard taskmaster and man "could undo his relationship to God by disobedience." This is in direct contrast to Calvin's belief that once God has put new life into a man, it was permanent. This was sometimes called the "perseverance of the saints." In the case of the Hutterites, it was the "obedience of the saints" which caused them to persevere.

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76. Ibid.

In Article Nine of the Genevan Confession,<sup>77</sup> Calvin writes that while regeneration is working in our mortal bodies, there remains in us "much imperfection and infirmity, so that we always remain poor and wretched sinners in the presence of God." This is not to say or imply that Calvin or Calvinists were introspective; what Calvin had in mind was "however much from day to day we increase in righteousness, there will never be a plenitude (of it) or perfection while we are on earth." By the almost complete absence of discussion concerning growth in the Christian life and an assumption that what the Gospels commanded, man was able to do, the Anabaptists showed they believed a Christian life very close to perfection was possible. Riedeman holds, as shown in Chapter Four, that once a person is re-born, he is ready to obey and spread the Gospel. Obedience and action push growth aside.

As Riedeman describes his view of sin, he tells of a marital situation where it was possible for a husband to commit adultery with his wife;<sup>78</sup> curiously enough so does Calvin!<sup>79</sup>

#### The Two Covenants; a Unity

Hardly anywhere in the writings of Calvin and Riedeman do we have so wide a difference of opinion on such an important theological and interpretive principle, nor one that is more clearly delineated; there is an abundance of material on this subject in both men. It is possible, in many cases, even to match discussions of the same verses.

Calvin is very definite that the Old Testament "believers," even under the Law, had a relationship with God of sufficient intimacy for them to be called mem-

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- 77. Calvin, John, "Confession of Faith which all the citizens and inhabitants of Geneva and all subjects of the country must promise to keep and hold. (1536)," Theological Treatises, ed. and tr. J.K.S. Reid, Library of Christian Classics, vol. XXII, Philadelphia. Westminster, 1954, page 28.
  - 78. Rechenschaft, page 108; Confession, page 102 (N.4).
  - 79. In ICR 2.8.44, he speaks against extreme lawlessness between two partners: "For it is fitting that thus wedlock contracted in the Lord be recalled to measure and modesty so as not to wallow in extreme lewdness. Ambrose censures this wantonness with a severe but not undeserved judgment; he has called the man who has no regard for shame or honorableness in his marriage practices, an adulterer toward his own wife."

bers of the Church.<sup>80</sup> The often stated promise, "I will be their God, promised this so that their hope might go beyond present benefits and extend to eternity."<sup>81</sup> God's blessing was to extend beyond the borders of their earthly existence.

In contrast to Riedeman's assertion that those in the Old Testament were in an inferior position because they did not have the Holy Spirit, Calvin says of Acts 2:17: this verse "intends to prove...that the Church<sup>82</sup> can only be repaired by the giving of the Holy Spirit." Thus, for Calvin, the Church originated in the Old Testament; the Holy Spirit is working in the Church in both Testaments.

In his commentary on Hebrews, as he makes the transition from chapter 11 to 12, Calvin asks the question "what more could any of us desire than...a share in all the benefits which God bestowed upon Abraham, Moses, David and all the patriarchs, prophets and good kings, so as to be united with them in the body of Christ?"<sup>83</sup> As he moves into chapter 12, he speaks of our imitating the saints "whose faith excelled under the Law," a statement which Riedeman would vigorously deny. In commenting on Gal. 4:22, he tells of a comparison between the Church and the family of Abraham, remarking that the house of Abraham was "then the true church."

#### The Church: visible and invisible.

While Riedeman says the church is a "holy people unto Christ" without spot, wrinkle or blemish, even more emphasized is the essence of the church in terms of what it does, its mission to shine as a light to the dark world. Calvin's primary concept of the church is more in terms of an organic body with inter-related and inter-dependent parts than in terms of an outward function (light). This does not mean that Riedeman did not view it as a corporate body, but only that his primary idea was in terms of operation rather than being. This

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80. The "children of the promise (Rom. 9:8) reborn of God, who have obeyed the commands of faith working through love (Gal. 5:6) have belonged to the covenant since the world began" (ICR 2.11.10).

81. ICR 2.10.9.

82. Calvin, John, The Acts of the Apostles, tr. J. Fraser and W. McDonald, Grand Rapids. Eerdmans, 1965, page 56.

83. Calvin, John, Commentary on Hebrews, tr. W.B. Johnston, ed. Torrance and Torrance, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1963, page 186.

is consistent with his activist principles.

Calvin, in his discussion of Mt. 5:13,14<sup>84</sup> (verses 13-20 being the reference Riedeman gives when he described the church as "light"), says Jesus called the apostles "the light of the world AND the salt of the earth." Riedeman never refers to the phrase "salt of the earth" in the Rochenschaft nor is it ever cited by itself among his biblical references. Is it possible that "salt of the earth" had implication for his concept of the church which were out of accord with his presuppositions?

E. Waltner<sup>85</sup> tells us "the Anabaptists were not pleased with the Reformers' distinction between a visible church which is earthly and an invisible church which is heavenly and pure."<sup>86</sup> An idealistic attempt to have a pure church always reaps what it sows - a church which is as imperfect as the New Testament church was (cf. Acts and Corinthians). A fact which always seems hidden to those who try this is that the NT church had only the same material of humanity to work with. For this reason the term "restoration" of the church (to New Testament purity) is less precise than the "creation of something new by the Holy Spirit."

Calvin realized these things when he ascertained that the scripture spoke in two ways about the problem of how to judge the church visible: (a) It means by "church" those people who are now in God's presence. This group, he says, consists of those who are true children of God by the grace of adoption and who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. (b) The other group is composed of the body of mankind now on the earth who "profess to worship one God and Christ." He admits that many of the "ambitious, greedy, envious and those of unclean life" will be found in the church. These must be judged by a "competent tribunal" when discovered and he admits, that at times, church discipline will not be as alert as it ought to be.<sup>87</sup> It is a view consistent with the work of the Holy Spirit who begins with unredeemed humanity as it is, rather than what it ought to be.

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- 84. ICR 4.3.3. In other references to 5:13-14, Calvin sets it in connection with the Apostles or certain moral problems in the Catholic Church. He never associates it directly with the essence or mission of the church.
  - 85. Waltner, E., "The Anabaptist Concept of the Church," MQR, 25:1951, page 8.
  - 86. Their attempt to find a visible and true body of Christ on earth in accord with the New Testament pattern has been tried many times, unsuccessfully.
  - 87. ICR, 4.1.7.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## Applied Presuppositions

The presuppositions appearing in this chapter, community of goods, adult baptism, human government, are the logical application of the ones in Chapter Four.

Community of Goods; No Private Property

Establishing a community where all things are held in common places the Hutterites not only in a unique position to the Magisterial Reformation, but also to the rest of Anabaptism.

There is no lack of information concerning the attitude of other Anabaptist leaders of the sixteenth century toward property. Their emphasis however, always falls upon stewardship and brotherly sharing, not upon community of goods itself.<sup>1</sup> As a group they were unanimous in disagreeing with Hutterite ideas. Conrad Grebel, founder of the Swiss Brethern, denied the charge that he had spoken against private possessions; Felix Manz, a colleague, believed that private possessions were to be used to help the needy. George Blaurock, the fiery Swiss preacher who was responsible for bringing Anabaptism to the Austrian valleys, believed that a Christian should share his possessions. Balthasar Hubmaier refers to the idea only once in Gespräch auf Meister Zwingli's Taufbüchlein (1525) saying, "No one would say, take away what a man has and make it common..."<sup>2</sup> Menno Simons vigorously denied the charge from opponents who "imagine...we all have possessions in common..."<sup>3</sup> At the Franckenthal Disputation of 1572 the Anabaptist leaders declared unanimously, "A Christian may buy and sell goods wherever it suits him." From this it should be evident that what the Anabaptist had in mind was a generous sharing of possessions and not "communion of goods."

It is asserted by Neff in the ME<sup>4</sup> that the prime motivating factor in the Hutterite establishment of the

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1. Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. I, page 658.

2. Ibid.

3. "We have not taught nor practiced community of goods, but we urge earnestly...to practice liberal giving " (Works, II 309).



community of goods was a "radical actualization of the Christian commandment of love (as Hutter and his fellow workers understood it). It was the practice of brotherly love by overcoming selfishness (Eigennutz) and entering into the complete brotherhood and unity of the Spirit." From this, he continues, "it becomes clear that the Hutterite Bruderhof cannot be compared with Catholic monasteries. It was not a retreat from secular temptation that brought the brethren together but the conviction that only thus does Christian love become a reality."<sup>5</sup>

If the Hutterite motive was "brotherly love" its circle was more limited than they realized, and inwardly directed; mixed with their desire to bring the gospel to the world one observes a profound contempt for the world when it does not understand or follow the Christian life as they conceive it. The thought of Riedeman contains a measure of dualism, mysticism and a larger correspondence to monasticism than is generally recognized.

Commitment to the idea of discipleship and restitution of the primitive church naturally fostered ideas which leaned toward a non-materialistic, puritanical concept of life.<sup>6</sup> It is clearly a biblical concept that man is but a servant entrusted with worldly possessions and he is expected to give a final account concerning these possessions to the Lord. (Lk. 16:19-31, 19:11-27).

If a man is born a legalist in soteriology, he is a born asceticist in sanctification. Asceticism is the belief that the body and the material world are in some

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4. Vol. I, page 660.

5. Ibid. The article in ME on "Community of Goods" however, makes the monastic comparison several times: (a) "only with the Hutterites did it lead to complete and nearly monastic establishment of ..." (b) "except for its monastic way of community living..." (c) "a comparison is made between living cooperatively and the Franciscan 'holy poverty' and that both principles derive from the same spirit of search for a practical and concrete expression of love and discipleship."

6. ME, vol. I, page 658.

7. Riedeman must answer guilty to this charge in some sense, in spite of his constant reiteration of "man is saved alone by God's power," because if one does not meet the very high ethical requirements he imposes, "they are no Christian." One becomes (or remains) a Christian because of his behaviour. This is legalism.

sense evil and that victory over them is both by abstinence from the world and by bodily suffering.<sup>8</sup> With reference to the theme of bodily suffering one may ask the question, "were the Hutterites to any degree mystics?" The way of salvation for the mystically inclined person characteristically follows the "via dolorosa" of cross bearing. He who persecutes "cannot be a Christian and the true church is bound to be persecuted."<sup>9</sup> This idea of suffering is set forth frequently in the Rechenschaft where Riedeman speaks of the person in whom Christ is to overcome "must surrender himself wholeheartedly to him and endure and suffer his work," and "whosoever endures and suffers the work and spirit of Christ is a member of the church; who suffereth not...is not a member of the Church of Christ."<sup>10</sup>

We have already met with three levels or grades of marriage in the Rechenschaft; the body, that which is apparently least spiritual is the lowest category. There is a correspondence between spiritual marriage of Hutterite thought<sup>11</sup> and a "spiritual marriage" which had come into vogue in Corinth in the first century. It may have been related to the over-spiritual atmosphere in Riedeman's idea of Christ's death; "It was not the divine (nature) of Christ that died, but the human nature that died." Here are definite indications of a docetic tendency and a reminder that at various times the

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8. Ramm, B., Protestant Biblical Interpretation, Boston, Wilde, 1956, pages 169-170.
  9. Bainton, Roland, Studies on the Reformation, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1964, page 23.
  10. Riedeman, Peter, Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehr, und Glaubens, von den Brüdern, so man die Hutterischen nennt, ausgangen 1565, Cotswold = Bruderhof, Ashton Kennes, Wilts, England, 1938, pages 12, 20, 37.  
English translation: Account of our Religion, Doctrine and Faith, Given by Peter Riedeman, of the Brothers Whom Men Call Hutterians, tr. Kathleen E. Hasenberg, M.A., 1st Edition, Bungay, Suffolk, England. Printed for Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., by Richard Clay and Company, Ltd., 1950, pages 18, 26, 40.
  11. This was the arrangement whereby one's wife was called a "marital sister." The husband and wife were first of all members of the brotherhood and had only a secondary relationship as husband and wife. Under the ascetic influence of Hutterite life, the choice of a partner was given to the Elders and the romanticism of a courtship was done away with. (Williams, G., Radical Reformation, page 514).

Anabaptists separated the Son of God into two natures and thereby betrayed a certain lack of comprehension of the incarnation.<sup>12</sup>

Dualism recognizes two separate and distinct orders of existence; the kind which is found in Riedeman is first of all between good and evil. From the way he explains and applies his statements there follows a distinction between the kingdoms of heaven and earth. Earth contains "created things," i.e., the normal goods one uses in daily life and the non necessary items which make life pleasant. It is these created things, matter, which Riedeman directs counsel to avoid. There are other distinctions with which he is concerned; the pure, holy and spotless bride of Christ (the small, but visible church on earth) made pure by Christ and kept pure by the pure and obedient lives of its earthly members; and its counterpart, the unbelieving world at large surrounding it, for which Riedeman has no use and advises one to avoid. He has and leaches a clear contempt for the "unregenerate" world (people) in spite of his assertion that the Hutterites desire the salvation of all men. Riedeman, in his teaching, has conceived a surrounding world so sin-darkened and hopeless that he would have the utmost difficulty in fulfilling the spirit of Paul's admonition to Timothy; "He (a bishop) must moreover have a good reputation with the non-Christian public" (I Tim. 3:7).<sup>13</sup>

The dualism which appears in the Rechenschaft is of a specific type and is not concerned with psychological variety. The split in his thinking comes with created matter as opposed to abstract spiritual qualities. Creation, both the objects of the created world, and the unregenerate people outside the church comprise for him an area to be avoided as much as possible and are to him essentially evil. One suspects that his extreme doctrine of the pure church and very high standards of behaviour have excluded many genuine Christians.

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12. Rechenschaft, page 24; Confession, page 29 (N.10).  
 13. Riedeman would want to be thought of as a godly, righteous person by the non-Christian public. So deep, however is his disdain of worldly and created things and his criticism of the life of the unregenerate world that any intercourse with the outside world would be desired only as an opportunity to evangelize, not, to enjoy them as normal persons. Riedeman's preoccupation with righteousness and the pure church would prevent this. In contrast with Riedeman, Pilgram Marbeck was well thought of by the Reformed clergy of Strasbourg except for his position on infant baptism. He made himself a very much sought after city engineer.

The existent "suffering" theme and the dividing of marriage into grades suggest a mystical tendency. These taken together with the strong tendency of dualism and suggestion of the somewhat "other worldly" gnostic view of Christ's death and the withdrawal from the world into a compact group constitute a strong case for monasticism.

The definition of sin and its relationship to matter is a useful starting point for the examination of his specific reasons for the community of goods. The scriptural definition is "missing the mark." From the time of Augustine the usual view given to the root of sin was pride. The Greek tragedies also presented it this way. For Riedeman, "all sin hath its source and origin in the sin of wrong taking in the garden of Eden (von dem unrechten Annehmen)" (Gen. 3:6). This is his basic presupposition for the community of goods.<sup>14</sup> This interpretation embraces only part of the meaning of the Genesis verse. The pressures on Eve were broader: "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise..." "Wrong taking" is too superficial an evaluation in the presence of other motives; wrong taking should be seen as an action which was motivated by the deeper problem of pride (cf. I John 2:15-16).

His doctrine of matter is the next important link in his thought: "as soon as man became perverse and turned away from God, the creation too became perverse for him...but to the unbelievers and sinners they are all changed and turned into evil."<sup>15</sup> He then attributes the ruin and vanity of man to "the evil will and the taking wrongly (of things) and misusing by men." This is his only mention of the evil will of man (as opposed to an evil creation); since his assertion about wrong taking is superficial, his statements on the dualism of matter will be taken at face value.

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14. Rechenschaft, page 92; Confession, page 88 (N.10).

15. Rechenschaft, page 13; Confession, page 19 (N.10). It would seem logical at this point to raise the question, "do not the prepositions in the phrases 'creation...became perverse for him' and 'but to the unbelievers and sinners' indicate that Riedeman has in mind a relative rather than absolute change in the nature of the creation?" If this were the only statement of his thought we had, it would seem to indicate only a relative change. Riedeman's further statements appear though, to indicate that he had in mind an absolute change.

The section on the community of goods shows further distinctly dualistic statements: "for which reason Christ called all temporal things foreign to man's essential nature..."<sup>16</sup> With this idea in mind, Riedeman goes on to say:

Now, because what is temporal doth not belong to us, but is foreign to our true nature, the law commandeth that none covet strange possessions, that is, set his heart upon and cleave to what is temporal and alien. Therefore whosoever will cleave to Christ and follow him must forsake such taking of created things and property, as he himself also saith, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." For if a man is to be renewed again into the likeness of God, he must put off all that leadeth him from him - that is the grasping and drawing to himself of created things - for he cannot otherwise attain God's likeness.<sup>16</sup>

The man who has "become free from created things" is thus able to "grasp what is true and divine."<sup>17</sup> It will become his treasure; this new attitude will bring a self-emptying and cause him to regard nothing as his, but belonging to all of God's children. The more a man cleaves to created things (der Kreatur noch abhanget), the further he shows himself to be dissimilar to the likeness of God and the community of Christ.<sup>18</sup>

Criticism of temporal things appears twice in the section "Whether a Christian Can Go To Law or Sit in Judgment:" "All temporal things (alles Zeitlich...) are foreign to us and naught is our own;" "he who seeketh temporal things seeketh what is not in Christ..."<sup>19</sup> One

16. Rechenschaft, page 93; Confession, page 89 (N.10). Riedeman cites Lk. 16:9-13 here. Jesus' mention of "unrighteous mammon" as opposed to "true riches" is spoken with regard to ownership, and not in reference to the nature of matter itself. Jeremias says that verse 10 is a proverb with two antithetic members; faithfulness and unfaithfulness in important things (Die Gleichnisse Jesu, Göttingen, Vanderhoeck und Ruprecht, 1962, page 47).

"Im ersten leitet Jesus seine Junger zu einem Gebrauch des Mammons an, der ihnen unvergängliche Frucht einträgt" (Rengstorff, Karl Heinrich, "Das Rvangelium nach Lucas," NTD, Bd. 1, page 187).

17. Rechenschaft, page 94; Confession, page 90 (N.10).

18. Ibid.

19. Rechenschaft, page 119-120; Confession, pages 112-114 (N.10).

of the strongest statements he makes about created things is that all who still cleave to them and forsake them not for Christ's sake "are not Christians." (!)<sup>20</sup>

One historian describes the community of goods as "Lutheran in its desire to avoid medicancy and Franciscan in its determination to avoid luxury."<sup>21</sup> It was practiced within the family rather than in a celibate manner.

Riedeman's first basis for the community of goods is: God the Father having nothing in himself, "but all that he hath he hath with the Son," and the Son having nothing except that He has it in common with the Father.<sup>22</sup> In other words, for Riedeman, the structure of the Trinity provides a model for community of goods and a reason against private property.

That the spiritual and economic community are identical in the mind of Riedeman is indicated by his use of the same verses (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37, the account of the community of goods in the New Testament) as a basis for community and fellowship in both the sections, "Community of Saints" and "Concerning the Community of Goods."

Other verses which Riedeman has in mind when he explains the basis of the community of goods are II Cor. 8:7-15, Ex. 16:16-18; verse 18 of the Exodus passage appears as verse 15 in II Cor. 8. The churches in Macedonia had made a gracious gift to needy Christians in another area. For Riedeman, this correspondence of a gift given by Christians to others (without other similarity to the temporary New Testament community of goods in Acts 2 and 4) is evidence enough to give him scriptural sanction for community of goods. Citing the list of gifts in I Cor. 12:12-27, Riedeman also maintains here that as spiritual gifts are given in common, likewise material possessions are given in common. He says Paul hopes "one might not suffer want but that there may be equality." This is difficult in the light of Paul's lengthy discussion (verses 4, 11, 14-26) that not all the spiritual gifts have equal value. The Church is to realize this and adjust to it, being grateful that all parts of the church work together for its upbuilding. In II Cor. 8:14 Paul refers to an "equality of abundance" among the private property of the Christians in Corinth and that they are to share it with other churches that no one be in want. Paul is not therefore, sanctioning a community of goods but the generous shar-

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20. Rechenschaft, page 114; Confession, pages 107-108 (N.10).

21. Bainton, R. (N. 9), page 128.

22. Rechenschaft, pages 40-41; Confession, page 43 (N. 10).

ing of private property. He wants, not a change in the present economic structure, but the right usage of the existing one.

Effectually, what Riedeman has done is to materialize a spiritual principle, bringing a thing out of its (spiritual) context and forcing it into another. The results of the economic "experiment" in Acts are clear enough; it served its purpose and fell into disuse.

In the light of recent scholarship, it now appears that it was not an equality of production. It must be remembered that it occasioned the first quarrel in the church (Acts 6:1-6). After it became obsolete, the poor were aided by other plans described in Gal. 2:10, I Cor. 16:1, II Cor. 8:1-15.<sup>23</sup>

The second basis for the community of goods lies in this: "God from the beginning ordained naught private for man, but all things in common." This stems from his presupposition that sin originated in "wrong taking." "Through such wrong taking and collecting of created things, he has been led far from God," says Riedeman. He is occupied again with matter and its inherent untrustworthiness. Furthermore, "created things" possess the characteristic of being "too high for man to draw within his group and collect, such as the sun and heavens...shows that not they alone, but all other created things are likewise common to man."<sup>24</sup>

A further indication of his attitude toward matter is his description of trading as a "sinful business;" the direct influence of the Apocrypha is shown here:

It is almost impossible for a merchant and trader to keep himself from sin; and as a nail sticks fast between door and hinge, so doth sin stick close between buying and selling (Sirach 26:29).

Such a statement makes sense, given Riedeman's presuppositions on created things and his principle of over-spiritualizing. He remarks that "profit is defrauding; when one buyeth a ware and selleth the same again, even as he bought it, making a profit, making the ware thereby dearer for the poor."<sup>25</sup>

Because Riedeman was so familiar with the Bible and the Apocrypha one wonders what he thought when he read Sirach 42:5, "Do not be ashamed of profit from dealing with merchants."

23. Beck, D.M., IBD, vol. I, page 666.

24. Rechenschaft, pages 92-93; Confession, pages 88-89 (N. 10).

25. A more accurate statement would be: "profit can be used to exploit."

Riedeman comments that community of goods was preached in Jerusalem saying: "For neither apostles nor churches were lacking, but rather the opportunity, manner and time." For reasons such as these indicated, he advocates the community of goods and the abolition of private property.

### Baptism; Adults Only.

With five important presuppositions examined, we are now in a better position to understand Riedeman's thinking on baptism; as baptism is the vehicle or instrument by which the purity of the church is effected, the previously mentioned areas of thought revolve around it and make its position more clear. The core of his thinking is located in five consecutive articles in Book I and most of the article "Concerning the Covenant of Grace Given to his People in Christ" in Book II.<sup>26</sup>

There is little subject material in Riedeman's understanding of baptism which is not touched upon in his four objections to infant baptism:

1. "In the whole of the Holy Scriptures not a word can be found in which baptism of children is even mentioned, much less commanded" (exegetical reason).

2. "We can find that the popes in their decrees have ordained that children who can say the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed should be baptized, which they would not have needed to ordain if it had been so before; therefore it is obviously a plant that hath been planted by men, and so must be rooted up" (historical reason).<sup>27</sup>

3. "Baptism is the bond of a good conscience with God (I Pet. 3:18-21)" (theological reason),

4. "That the covenant of grace is a covenant of the knowledge (...ein Testament des Wissens und

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26. Rechenschaft, pages 70-83, 179-205; Confession, pages 68-81, 170-188 (N. 10).

27. The Schleitheim Confession written in 1527 in the village of Schleithem in northern Switzerland, and destined to become the definitive document of early Anabaptism concurs with this objection. Article I reads: "Baptism shall be given to all those.... this excludes all infant baptism, the highest and chief abomination of the Pope " (MQR 19:1945, page 248, tr. J.C. Wenger).



Erkenntnis...) and recognition of God (Jer. 31:34). Children, however, know neither good nor evil. That is alone reason enough...had we no other reasons, to reject and put away child baptism" (theological reason).<sup>28</sup>

Since the first objection is of such importance and recent scholarship on this subject now enables us to come to a closer solution of the problem, it will be dealt with in the latter part of this section.

In his second objection, Riedeman is just as confident that infant baptism (No. 2 above) is historically a fiction "ordained by the popes in their decrees" as he is that (Roman Catholic) church buildings in Europe originated when "this country was forced by the sword to make a confession," and that the churches were "temples dedicated to heathen gods originating through sacrifice to devils."<sup>29</sup>

Luther, Zwingli and Calvin did not leave the medieval teaching on baptism unchanged however. Although they did not dispense with infant baptism *per se*, they changed the character of the Roman doctrine of 'baptismal regeneration.' The Reformation doctrine of baptism was re-investigated and re-formulated, particularly with Zwingli and Calvin. Because of their geographical location the Hutterites would naturally have more contact with the Lutherans. At various points, Luther was more conservative on the doctrine of baptism<sup>30</sup> and this may have been one reason for Riedeman's accusing his opponents of taking the concept of baptism directly from the Roman Church.<sup>31</sup> The accompanying table (next page) shows how the two Reformers based their views of baptism on scripture and early texts from the Fathers; Riedeman's charge does not apply here.

Riedeman's third objection to infant baptism is,

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28. Rechenschaft, page 71; Confession, page 69 (N. 10).
  29. For further discussion of the "origin of the church" in Europe, see Chapter Three, pages 54-55.
  30. An example of this would be the difference between Luther and the other Reformers on emergency baptism: "The Reformed Churches...rejected emergency baptism, which the Lutherans adopted from Rome. Only the preacher called by the congregation is authorized to baptize and no one else, least of all the midwife" (Second Helvetic Confession, xx); Niesel, W., The Gospel and the Churches, tr. D. Lewis, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1962, page 270.
  31. "Luther sought to combine belief in the necessity of baptism with his doctrine of justification by faith alone" (ODCC, page 126).

Comparison of Views between Riedeman, Zwingli  
and Calvin on Baptism

Riedeman

1. Is baptism a covenant sign? Baptism is a testament of the recognition, knowledge and grace of God.
2. What is the scriptural source of baptism? Christ's commission in Matt. 28:18-20.
3. Does New Covenant baptism equal Old Covenant circumcision? Absolutely not!
4. Is infant baptism associated with medieval connections? Yes, the popes sanctioned it. In contrast to Zwingli Riedeman stressed the relationship of the individual to God.
5. Is infant baptism based on original sin? Yes, and baptism is a sign that the old man has been made new.

## Comparison, cont'd.

Zwingli<sup>32</sup>

Calvin

Yes, rather than a strengthening of baptismal faith. Can validly be administered to children born in the covenant.

"Baptism is a symbol for bearing witness to our religion."

"Baptism is a sign of the covenant and receives infants by this rite into the covenant (ICR 4.16.5).

Source located in John at the River Jordan. Because thus grounded in an action prior to the crucifixion, the redemptive significance is lowered.

Christ's promises are the basis of baptism (ICR 4.16.3). Established in its relation to circumcision and the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:2-3). Also I Cor. 7:4, Gen. 17:12.

Yes, Zwingli convinced when Bullinger showed him texts by Tertullian (2nd cent.) and Lactantius (3rd cent.) showing the unity of OT and NT covenants and thus unity of circumcision and baptism.

Calvin equates the two (ICR 4.14.24). Catechism of the church of Geneva (Theol. Treatises LCC vol. XXII, page 135). Baptism has taken the place of circumcision (ICR 4.16.4).

He disassociated it completely. Baptism for Zwingli is a covenantal sign belonging to the family and community rather than the individual.

"We must utterly reject that Scholastic dogma which notes such a great difference between the sacraments of the old and new law, as if the former only foreshadowed God's grace, but the latter gave it to us as a present reality (ICR 4.14.23). The idea Calvin rejects is very close to Riedeman.

No, pointed to Col. 2:10-12 indicating that water baptism replaces circumcision as the covenant sign.

Calvin quotes Peter as saying that baptism is not a removal of filth from the flesh, but a good conscience before God. I Pet. 3:21 (ICR 4.15.2). Not set free of original sin by baptism (ICR 4.15.10).

"Baptism is the bond of a good conscience with God." This objection is naturally connected with the fourth objection: "The covenant of grace is a covenant of knowledge and recognition of God." The recognition of God cometh from hearing the word of the gospel.<sup>33</sup> He means that it would not be possible for an infant to have this experience. It is possible to show that this interpretation is dependent upon understanding "conscience" in modern psychological terms and not in the sense which the biblical author intended it.

Riedeman's qualifications for baptism require that a person be born after the Christian manner, i.e.,

Since children are not born of God after the Christian manner, that is through the preaching of the word, faith and the Holy Spirit, they cannot be baptized in the right way....since all who are born of Adam (children and unconverted adults) partake of his fellowship, should they desire to be embodied in the Church of Christ, they must be born of Christ in the Christian way.<sup>34</sup>

He places an absolute priority upon the necessity for the baptismal candidate to have faith. Faith only makes a person blessed when it is sealed by baptism; baptism is seen as the agent of blessing. Because infants (and young children) are incapable of entering into the covenant of the recognition and acknowledgement of God it is "pure tomfoolery to baptize children before they believe."<sup>35</sup>

The next step should be an examination of the phrases: appeal, clear conscience and bond, which Riedeman uses when he cites I Pet. 3:21, a verse which has been very important to Anabaptists in their theology for four hundred years. "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but 'appeal' to God for a 'clear conscience,' through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Riedeman refers to this verse at least seven times in his discussion of baptism to substantiate his idea that baptism is a "bond" of a good conscience with God. This idea of baptism as a bond is predominant in his thinking. Can the importance which he attaches to these terms be justified? (A table indicating how Riedeman uses the terms "bond" and "covenant" appears on pages 104 f.)

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33. Rechenschaft, page 79; Confession, page 77 (N. 10).

34. Rechenschaft, page 70; Confession, page 68 (N. 10).

35. Rechenschaft, page 189; Confession, page 174 (N. 10). "Tomfoolery" is the translation of "Affen-spiel" which is "monkey-play."

B. Reicke in his work, The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism, calls to our attention certain matters indicating that even the RSV translation has overlooked important material concerning this verse. It is easy, he says, to state what baptism is not, and difficult to understand it positively.

The usual translation... "prayer to God for a good conscience" is of course impossible, seeing that Baptism cannot be a prayer and also that "a good conscience" in our usual meaning is not something that one can reasonably pray for, rather this spiritual habit itself should be a prerequisite for undergoing Baptism."<sup>36</sup>

There is, asserts Reicke, a special meaning of syneidaesis agathae, and it may not be translated by "good conscience." This suggests, he says, "modern psychological and moral conceptions which may be wholly unsuitable" in the context of I Peter. The attempt of many to see indications of the psychological and moral idea of conscience is "to a great extent uncritical, wishful thinking."<sup>37</sup> The actual meaning is much more general, and we will presently see that it takes a direction rather opposite to the present one.

An important consideration is the context of the word; it occurs in 2:19 and 3:16 also. In both these places syneidaesis has around it ideas and expressions indicating that it must have the meaning of "certain practical direction of the will and attitude toward society."<sup>38</sup>

Here (3:16) syneidaesis agathae must be considered as completing the exhortation to appear before the pagans with humility and respect; it must in some way harmonize with the words about good Christian habits which are thought to be an active reason for the pagans to change round to a more favorable conception of the Christians from a juridical and social point of view.<sup>39</sup>

It is possible now to make a preliminary conclusion: Riedeman interprets 3:21 only in terms of an in-

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36. Reicke, B., The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism, Copenhagen, Munksgaard, 1946, page 173.

37. Ibid., page 174. The term syneidaesis acquired the implication of "conscience" over many centuries through the work of preachers and moralists.

38. Ibid., pages 176, 177.

39. Ibid., page 177.

## Baptism is the bond of a good conscience.

Quotation	Verse	German	Rechenschaft	Confession
1. Baptism is the bond of a good conscience with God.	I Pet. 3: 18-21	"der Tauf ein Bund eines guten Gewissens"	71	69
2. The bond of a good conscience.	I Pet. 3: 18-22	"der Tauf ein Bund ein- es guten Gewissens"	79	77
3. and how baptism is a bond with God if he desire to bind himself to God and be baptized.	I Pet. 3: 18-22	"Verbindung" "zu verbinden"	82	79
	I Pet. 3: 21		82	79
4. Baptism, after faith, as a sealing of the believing children of God, that a good conscience may unite with God, "But he that believeth not is damned."	I Pet. 3: 21-22	"gutes Gewissens...mit Gott verbinde."	189	174
5. where he (Peter) speaks of the covenant of grace saying, "It is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the covenant of a good conscience with God.	I Pet. 3: 18-22	"er vom Gnadenbund"	200	184

# Baptism, con'd.

6. But what is a good conscience towards God other than that I know that I know that I have a gracious God, who...that I may know him as almighty and be moved...to bind myself completely to him...	Exod. 20:6 II Cor. 6: 17-18	"ein gut Gewissen gegen Gott"	201	185
7. the covenant of his grace and what kind of a covenant it is.	I Pet. 3: 18-22	"den Bund seiner Gnaden...und was es für ein Bund sei"	244	224

dividual, personal relationship to God. He restricts the meaning more than is warranted. It is consistent with his ideas about purity of the church and the avoidance of the surrounding pagan society.

Reicke terms the modern "Consciousness of God" as "the voice of the heart," or a "feeling of blame or innocence." Suggested meanings for syneidaesis such as "temper," "attitude of mind," "disposition" or "intention" are reflected in the New Testament and similar literature.

Actually every time syneidaesis, with the attribute agathae kalae, is found in the N.T. and in the earliest Church writings we have...a meaning of good-will and solidarity. See Acts 23:1, 24:16, Heb. 13:18.<sup>40</sup>

The "good-will" is to be primarily directed to the commandments of God; loyalty to the authorities should be an equal consideration because of 2:19 and 3:16.

The conclusion we come to then is that "conscience" (RSV) in 3:21 should be translated as "good-will," meaning that it is not a "conscience or feeling within the believer," but "good-will" which is an honest and loyal attitude,<sup>41</sup> that the surrounding culture may perceive the wholesome character and right intention of the Christian. An intention of blameless behaviour is required, rather than the absolute perfection (with almost no possibility or necessity of growth) which Riedeman has set forth in the section on "Sin," Chapter Three.

The second word in 3:19 which will help make the meaning of the word more clear is eperootaema (appeal) in the phrase "an appeal to God..." It is hapax legomenon in the N.T. Reicke tells us that "prayer," the meaning usually assigned to it, "is actually quite un-

40. Ibid., Page 178.

41. Ibid. H. Greeven, writing in TWNT, tries to advance the incorrect idea that eperootaema means "question" here. While it had this connotation in earlier Greek usage, this is to be rejected here. (Kittel, G., Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Bd. 2, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1932, pages 688-689).  
Bauer, Arndt-Gingrich, add that the eperootaema should be translated as "pledge" in 1 Pet. 3:21, Arndt, W.F. & Gingrich, F.W., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (tr. by Arndt-Gingrich from W. Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen Urchristlichen Literatur, fourth ed., 1949-52), Chicago, 1957, page 285.



thinkable in this connection where we are to obtain a definition of the essence of Baptism."<sup>42</sup> He says the fundamental meaning of the word is "question," a term which frequently occurs in classical Greek. It can also have the meaning "answer," "resolution," or "declaration." Other meanings of the word can be "agreement," "undertaking," or "contract."<sup>43</sup> This, he says, comes from the fact that in ancient practice, a contract was made by means of oral questioning, and the use of the word as a term for the making of a contract arose from these questions. He draws the conclusion that the most natural way to translate the whole phrase would be; "an agreement about" or "an undertaking to a loyal attitude of mind."<sup>44</sup>

The questioning party in this agreement is God, the Church, He who administers Baptism or some other similar authority....To define the Christian act of initiation as an undertaking to be loyal towards God and man fits very well in this connection. It is quite natural that Baptism is defined as an undertaking in an ethical meaning.<sup>45</sup>

With these facts in mind, we are now better able to investigate Riedeman's statement, "baptism is the bond of a good conscience with God." In the two sections where he discusses baptism at length (cf. no. 1 this chapter) he makes use of this term some five times and implies it twice more (for details, see preceding chart, page 104). It appears obvious that he is using the German word "Bund" as equivalent of the English "bond" or "covenant" and the Greek eperootaema. He is correct in his use of this term.

Again, Bibles used in the time of the Reformation or earlier give us an answer.<sup>46</sup> Of several early Bibles examined, a Luther translation printed in Strassburg<sup>47</sup>

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42. Ibid. (Reicke, N. 36), page 182.

43. Ibid., page 183.

44. Ibid., page 185.

45. Ibid.

46. A modern German translation of the Bible called the "Zürcher Bibel" translates I Pet. 3:21 as: ("Sie ist ja) nicht ein Abtun der Unsauberkeit des Fleisches, sondern ein Bitte an Gott um ein gutes Gewissen durch..." (Die Heilige Schrift des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Zürich, Verlag der Zwingli-Bibel, 1942, page 303). This is not satisfactory since neither "Bitte" nor "gutes Gewissen" correspond with the original Greek. A modern Luther translation is better in that it renders eperootaema as "Bund." Die Bibel (Luther), Priv. Württ. Bibel-

in 1529/30 has the phrase "sondern der bundt eines guten Gewissens mit Gott,..." in I Pet. 3:21. Since the idea "baptism is the bond or covenant of a good conscience with God" appears here, there are several reasons indicating the possibility that Riedeman arrived at this concept through a Bible of his century; first of all it is a German Bible; Riedeman travelled and was in prison in German language areas. Secondly, the date 1529/30 indicates not so much that he had access to this Bible, but that since "Bund" was an acceptable word at that time in the translation of this verse, it increases the likelihood that it would appear in other Bibles to which Riedeman might have had access. Thirdly, neither the Anabaptist in general, nor the Hutterites in particular, had their "own" Bible as opposed to "reformed" Bibles. They were known to be fond of the Froschauer (Zürcher) Bible (see N. 10 and 11, Chap. 3); they certainly must have used other German Bibles when the Froschauer was not available.<sup>48</sup>

At this point we should translate 3:21 and compare with Riedeman's thought on the chart (pages 104-105). Verse 3:21 now reads:

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as

an	[agreement	undertaking to God (and men) for an	[honest or
	contract		loyal
			"good-will"

attitude of mind, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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anstalt, 1950, page 224.

47. Deutsche Bibel in Luthers Uebersetzung (Apokryphen in der Uebersetzung von Leo Jud), Strassburg (Durlach): Wolf Köpfl (Veltin Kobian) 1529/30 in Folio.
48. The small Froschauer Bible of 1527 (N. 11, Chap 3, page 306) reads: "...sunder die gewüsse kundtschafft ainer guten gewßssen mit Gott durch die aufersteeung Jesu Christi." The Froschauer Bible of 1536 (N. 1, Chap. 3) reads the same. "Kundtschafft" according to J. and W. Grimm can have a decided political meaning: "Athanasius machte mit den Saracenen genaue kundtschaft verbunde sich mit denselben (Hahn. histor. 1721 1,215)." (Grimm, J. and W., Deutsches Wörterbuch, Bd. 5, Leipzig, Hirzel Verlag, 1873, column 2640). This "political meaning" of course is a covenant or pact, and therefore gives approximately the same meaning as "Bund" in the Luther translation (Strassburg 1529/30) mentioned.

No. 6 on the chart on pages 104-105 gives Riedeman's definition of baptism. His use of the term "Bund" (bond, covenant) poses no problem since it comes from a translation agreeing with the Greek. When this is placed with his definition of a good conscience (chart, pages 100-101) we have the following:

(Baptism is the agreement resulting from) knowing that I have a gracious God, who in Christ hath disregarded, remitted and forgiven me all sins and hath in Christ freely offered himself to me as Father...with his manifold grace and riches...(in order that) I may know him...and be moved and stirred to zeal thereby to bind myself to him, to submit to him and trust him...as Father...who will seek the very best for me. Hereupon I establish a covenant with him, in which I bind myself completely to him and give him my members...and allow him to do all things in me....As a proof of this I accept the pure water, (of baptism), that...I desire to live a holy life.<sup>49</sup>

The conclusion is that both satisfactory and unsatisfactory elements appear in Riedeman's interpretation of the verse. On the negative side, something like "modern psychological and moral ideas of conscience" are present in his thinking on baptism. Because baptism is a "covenant of the recognition and knowledge of God," an Anabaptist is compelled to look introspectively into his conscience to ascertain the feeling of blame or innocence. Secondly, the "direction and attitude toward society" in Hutterite thought is too other-worldly; and thirdly, there is the Hutterite concept of absolute perfection in behaviour, rather than the suggested "intention of blameless behaviour," which is more in accord with the possibilities of the Christian life as described by Paul.

Riedeman comes closest to the meaning of the Greek in his definition of a good conscience in no. 6 in the chart, "Baptism is the bond of a good conscience" pages 104-105. It is much to Riedeman's credit in his explanation of syneidacis agathas he indicates the "good will" is a product of God's grace. God has really initiated the covenant and the "good will" or "honest attitude of mind" is in response to it.

We are now ready to turn to the first of Riedeman's objections to infant baptism; "not a word can be found in which baptism of children is even mentioned." He is quite insistent on this conclusion; its basis is the

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49. Rechenschaft, page 201; Confession, page 185 (N. 10).

latter part of objection four; "the covenant of grace is a covenant of the knowledge and recognition of God.... Children, however, know neither good nor evil."

This is the most basic objection the Anabaptist raises to infant baptism. Their conviction that a baptismal candidate must be of sufficient age to know and acknowledge God and distinguish between good and evil forever excludes infants. Anabaptists (and present day Christians of Baptist persuasion) are so committed to this requirement that they find it very difficult to evaluate impartially certain information of a cultural, historical and linguistic nature which today places the argument more on the side of infant baptism. <sup>50</sup>

Baptism of infants was never brought into question on a large scale until the sixteenth century. It is readily acknowledged by those of Reformed persuasion that there is no distinct command in the New Testament to baptize infants and children. Two possibilities are open from this fact: (1) it could mean that it was intended that infant baptism was not to be practiced, or (2) that it was common enough to be taken for granted and the writers of the New Testament did not think it necessary to mention it.<sup>51</sup> The indirect evidence of the New Testament leans decidedly in the latter direction. While there is little, if any, indirect evidence that would lend support to the first alternative, the reverse of "no direct command to baptize infants" is also true; there is no direct command not to baptize infants in the New Testament. If any progress is to be made toward a solution it must therefore follow that course suggested by the indirect evidence since it is always more helpful than silence. The distance that one can progress toward a final solution is measured by the worth of the indirect evidence.

The indirect evidence is mainly from three sources: (1) from the New Testament itself, or biblical evidence;

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50. Tertullian (c. 160 - c. 220) urges in De Baptismo, 18,3-6 that baptism of children and similarly immature adults be deferred, not for reasons similar to the Anabaptists, however, but because of the problem of post-baptismal sin. A few small groups in the Middle Ages which were heretical in other ways opposed it (ODCC, page 690).

51. "Since the New Testament documents are concerned mainly with the expansion of Christianity in the non-Christian world, and hardly at all with the natural recruitment of the Church from persons of Christian parentage and upbringing. This lack of evidence is not surprising" (ODCC, page 690).

(2) the writing of the Church Fathers; (3) archeological evidence; information derived from inscriptions on tablets and tombstones.

From within the New Testament, several passages give good indication that Paul intended establishing baptism as the equivalent of Jewish circumcision;<sup>52</sup> Col. 2:11-12, where there is an undeniable parallel between circumcision in verse 11 and baptism in verse 12. Also, "circumcision of Christ" as a theological term appears. Acts 21:21 may shed some light on Paul's intention with regard to baptism where he teaches that circumcision is to be stopped, but he does not mention infant baptism. In Eph. 6:1, the apostle refers to "children as in the Lord" without specifying age. W.F. Flemington remarks; "he would scarcely have used this distinctive phrase except of those actually included in the body of Christ, to which, according to Pauline teaching, baptism is the rite of entry."<sup>53</sup> One begins to sense a recognizable difference in the attitude toward children between Paul and the Anabaptists.

Riedeman's first objection to baptism (...not a word can be found in which the baptism of children is even mentioned...) betrays a serious inadequacy in his interpretive method. He has correctly ascertained that the New Testament does not mention infant baptism. But, what a document says and what it means are two different questions. Interpretation is not complete until both have been answered. Riedeman has drawn his conclusions on infant baptism from the answer he obtained from the first question without asking the second. It is at this point that good biblical interpretation wants to answer "what does the text mean?" by using historical, cultural and linguistic tools.

A consideration of major significance in the problem of infant baptism continues to be what is called "household baptism" or the *oikos* formula. Present day Baptist scholars have questioned whether the phrases in Acts 16:15,33; 18:8 mentioning "household" (*oikos*) are broad enough to specifically include children and infants. The work of J. Jeremias and E. Stauffer is of a character which (a) answers the question "What does the document mean?" and (b) shows in a very clear way that *oikos* does include children and infants.<sup>54</sup> They have also shown that when "households and families" are mentioned in the Old Testament, the same is true.

Instances from the Old Testament which confirm that there was an "*oikos* formula" there include the ac-

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52. IBD, vol. I, page 352.

53. Ibid.

54. Jeremias, J., *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*, tr. D. Cairns, London, SCM, 1960, pages 18-

count of Ahimelech's being threatened by Saul that "he and all his father's house must die (I Sam. 22:16). When this threat was carried out, its brutality is shown by the fact that, with one exception of one fugitive, not even little children and infants were spared (verse 19; children and sucklings).<sup>55</sup> When Joseph's brothers were given permission by Pharaoh (Gen. 45:18) to bring their "households" to Egypt, his kindness was shown in providing carriages for the women and children and those who were unable to walk, i.e., old people and children (l<sup>e</sup>tapp<sup>e</sup>kem, verse 19). That this is what is really indicated is confirmed in Gen. 46:7; the grandsons and the granddaughters were taken with him.<sup>56</sup>

Jeremias shows the ritual use of the oikos formula includes the whole household and includes the youngest members in the account of Elkanah who travels with his whole "household" to Shiloh to make a sacrifice (I Sam. 1:21). The noteworthy fact here is the exception that Hannah with her still nursing child stays behind (verse 22). Thus, in the Old Testament, the oikos formula lays emphasis on the inclusion of the smallest child.<sup>57</sup>

The oikos formula is not a theory as some describe it, but a solid piece of evidence based on careful linguistic and cultural research - the product of painstaking and impartial investigation.<sup>58</sup> It would take contrary textual discoveries of a magnitude comparable to the Dead Sea Scrolls to undermine the evidence as it now stands. The use of oikos to include whole households along with children has been clearly established.<sup>59</sup> Its fundamental meaning is no longer subject to question.

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24.

55. Ibid., pages 20-21.

56. Ibid., page 21.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid. Professor Jeremias' concern to be fair with the evidence and draw only conclusions which are legitimate is quite clear in Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, (tr. D. Cairns) and The Origin of Infant Baptism, tr. D.M. Barton (Studies in Historical Theology, no.1), London, 1963.

59. "What was...commonly understood by oikos is shown in Ign. Smyrn. 13:1 'Greetings to the families of my brothers, along with their wives and children;' i.e. father and mother of the household and children of all ages....The addition of holos, pas, h<sup>o</sup> pantes, (the whole, all) makes it quite clear that no single member of the household was excluded from baptism;....Old Testament terminology confirms this conclusion...from early (OT) times there was a constant biblical oikos formula' which 'not only referred to the children in addition to

Especially interesting is the extra biblical evidence in the writings of the early Fathers; at his death Polycarp says he has been a slave of Christ eighty-six years. Here he implies his reception into the church while an infant, ca. 69 or 70 A.D. (Martyrdom of Polycarp 9).

Similar statements by Fathers in the first and second centuries indicate that they and others were received into the church at infancy. Among these are Justin Martyr (writing ca. 155), Polycarp (Bishop at Ephesus, second century) and Origen, who said "infant baptism has been handed down from the Apostles."<sup>60</sup> It is ironic that Antipaedobaptists, while arguing that the above information does not constitute a strong argument for infant baptism, are quite willing to accept other quotations of the Fathers in the reconstruction and establishment of biblical texts.

In De Baptismo, Tertullian makes no secret that he deplores infant baptism, "but" according to Flemington, "he fails to use what would have been his strongest argument...that the practice was not primitive."<sup>61</sup>

The argument from silence (that the New Testament does not mention infant baptism) in this case carries little weight because the establishing of what the text means, as has been done here, is part of what the text says. The presence of well established "indirect evidence" presents a stronger argument for infant baptism than the argument from silence that "it is not mentioned." It must be borne in mind that there is an "argument from silence" on the side of infant baptism; there is not even indirect evidence in the New Testament that baptism was criticised or spoken against.

Finally, there exists archeological and inscription evidence significant to the matter of infant baptism. An example from approximately 200 A.D. is:

Eutychiano filio dulcissimo Eutyclus pater d(e)d(i-  
cauit) u(ixit) a (nno) I m(ensibus) II d(iebus)  
IIII Dei ser(u)us

T X Θ Y C

"By the predicate Dei ser(u)us (slave of God)," says Jeremias, "the one-year-old child is marked as baptized."<sup>62</sup>

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the adults but had quite special reference to the children, and not least to any small children who might be present'....(Ibid., page 20).

60. Ibid.

61. Flemington, IBD, vol. I, page 352.

62. Jeremias (N. 54), page 76.

From the third century on, evidence such as this is available. The case for infant baptism, then, is further strengthened by the agreement of indirect internal evidence in the scriptures with archeological findings. There is no contrary evidence of a similar value which gives support to the argument from silence.

### Government: Given in Wrath

Riedeman's thought on the subject of human government is more direct and appears less complicated; one reason is that this presupposition is very directly related to the one on Community of Goods, in his treatment of matter, dualism and created things. In various respects it is a logical extension of these ideas. Because Israel requested a king, says Riedeman, God became angry with them; the wrath of God is one of the contributing factors to the origin of government.

...namely, from the wrath of God...."I gave thee a king in mine anger and took him away again in my wrath." Thus, it is evident that governmental authority is not of grace but is given in disfavour and anger, and that after the turning away of the people. Since they forsook God and followed the flesh, flesh had to have dominion over them.<sup>63</sup>

Government thus becomes (I Sam. 8:7-22) a picture, a sign and reminder (Bild, Zeichen...) of man's departure from God. For him governmental authority is a servant of God's anger and vengeance; as long as it exists, it witnesses to the fact that the anger of God is still over sinners. Governmental authority is appointed for the discipline and punishment of an evil and profligate nation.<sup>64</sup> Paul, he says, has named it a servant of God's vengeance, by means of which God will avenge himself on their sins. The authority which a government has is the result of mankind turning aside from God and walking according to the flesh. He cites here Gen. 6:3 ("My spirit will not always strive with man."). Governmental authority was thus ordained after the flood to be a "rod of the anger (einer Ruten seines Zorns) and vengeance of God, to shed the blood of those who have shed blood."

Riedeman shows himself somewhat more optimistic over the function of government when he admits, "one should be obedient and submit to government as ordained by God for the purpose of protection." This is the limit of his view concerning its positive function; he is consistently negative when speaking of its nature and ori-

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63. Rechenschaft, page 110; Confession, page 104 (N.10).

64. Rechenschaft, page 108; Confession, page 102 (N.10).



gin.

God's anger is the product of the turning away of Israel from God their King in I Sam. 8:1-9 and asking for an earthly king. Here Riedeman's understanding of history and the development of society presents a problem: "from these words (Israel's request for an earthly king) we see how governmental authority grew and from whence it came, namely from the wrath of God....Thus it is evident that governmental authority is not of God but is given in disfavor and anger, and that after the turning away of the people."

It is his assumption, repeated many times, that the origin of all government in the world stems from Israel's asking for a king in I Sam. 8. There were, however, pagan nations in antiquity who had governments before God chose Israel. If this were not so, the history of society would have been one of chaos till God gave Israel its king. Riedeman is not trying to say that the character of human government changed when this occurred, but that it did not exist before that time. What did exist in Israel before the giving of a king was, according to the Hutterite, the ideal religious "state" where God ruled through a charismatic leader.<sup>65</sup> This is termed a theocracy. There is some truth to Riedeman's complaint that the rule of the king, who was requested from a human motive, was less spiritual than the administration of Moses, Joshua and the Judges.<sup>66</sup> R.A. Knox points out a correlation between a desire for a theocracy and enthusiasm; "the true enthusiast can only be at home under a theocracy with an accredited prophet as its visible head."<sup>67</sup> To the enthusiast, another form of government is unacceptable since it is necessarily based on natural law.

We must then view the request for a king and its effects as a strong presupposition in Riedeman's thinking. Governments before and after Israel existed and are a necessary part of the social organization for mankind. Riedeman betrays a lack of understanding of the structure and development of society. This should, however, not be surprising in a provincial European of the sixteenth century who did not have the advantage of a good education.

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65. He fails to mention the governments of other nations which existed at that time.

66. Riedeman seems to have overlooked the carnal life of the Judge, Samson.

67. Knox, R.A., Enthusiasm, Oxford, 1952, page 123. "The theocracy with an accredited prophet as its visible head" is an accurate description of Riedeman and the Hutterites.

An examination of I Sam. 8:1-9 reveals something which Riedeman has overlooked: (1) the elders of Israel were correct in asking for a change of "government" since Samuel's two sons, Joel and Abijah, had carried out their offices as judges in an unworthy manner (verse 3b, :they took bribes and perverted justice"), (2) the account indicated that God blamed Israel not for seeking "earthly government" (since they had earthly judges previously) but for asking for the type of earthly government which they did.<sup>68</sup> God and Samuel were displeased because of their desire for a king. Riedeman's argument therefore carries less weight than he realizes; (3) God's displeasure began with their forsaking him "from the day I brought them out of Egypt" (I Sam. 8:8) and not in this single bad request. The burden is on Riedeman to show historically rather than theologically that human government did not exist before the time he claims.

The existence of two kingdoms (related naturally to his philosophical dualism and over-spiritualization of many things) in his thought contributes to the idea that government is essentially an evil thing. Human government is the earthly, inferior kingdom. The kingdom which Christ brings is that which one should seek. This has come about because "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until the hero, Christ shall come." This has now happened, he says; "therefore it (the Judaic kingdom) is ended, stopped, broken in Christ."<sup>69</sup> The term "broken" is significant, indicating his basic conviction that everything outside of Christ has no legitimate status and is separated from it.

A second factor in this area, contributing to his views on human government is the position Christ occupies as ruler of the "other kingdom." Finding his idea in Eccl. (Sirach) 17:17,18 he says, "over Israel he alone is Lord." He is a spiritual king using a spiritual sword and employing spiritual servants. This ruler of new Israel is different from the human king given in I Sam. 8, "given not in anger like the other, but in blessing...even as the other was ordained to shed the blood of him who sheddeth a man's blood, this king hath been ordained to preserve the souls of men." The other king is ordained to take vengeance on evil, while Christ is commissioned to return it good. One is ordained to hate the enemy, the other to love him.<sup>70</sup>

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68. Their motive was to have a king (I Sam. 8:5) so that they could have the satisfaction of being like other nations.

69. "darumb in Christo endet, aufhöret, und zerbrochen wird", Rechenschaft, page 111; Confession, page 105 (N. 10).

It is very pleasing to God, says Riedeman, when one is rightly obedient (billig gehorsam) and diligent therein (fleissiger darinnen) to obey the civil government. In this, he acknowledges the command of Paul (Rom. 13: 1-7) to be submissive to the governing authorities. Even though the office be filled with godless men, "it is not thereby annulled."<sup>71</sup> Man is to obey God through the divinely appointed office of government (even though its nature is negative) unless

the rulers command and act against God, there one must leave their command undone, and obey God rather than man. For the conscience hath been set free and is reserved for God alone, that he and no human being may be Lord of the same and....wherever the government...lay hands upon the conscience and control the faith of man...<sup>72</sup>

Certainly no one could disagree with this statement as it stands. The point at which the Anabaptists will take a different course in obedience to the authorities will be from their interpretation of the word "conscience." Their understanding of the ethical requirements of the Christian life is informed by the presuppositions in Chapters Four and Five. The statement above concerning obedience is virtually the same as the Reformers; as their conscience follows their ideas, the obedience will take a very different path.

Since the Reformation, the gentle, peace-loving Anabaptists have continually affirmed their intention to obey the existing government as long as it did not violate their conscience. The list of things for which they have been falsely accused and misunderstood is unfortunately long. Particularly in the early years of the Reformation, because they had such a negative and stubborn attitude toward the authorities, various fantastic accusations were spread. Luther reacted violently to the debacle at Münster.<sup>73</sup> Once sympathetic to the Anabaptists

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70. Rechenschaft, page 112; Confession, page 106 (N.10).

71. Rechenschaft, page 109; Confession, page 103 (N.10).

72. Ibid.

73. Where a fantastic group of Anabaptist refugees attempted in 1533-35 to establish a theocracy under the leadership of Jan Mattys and John of Leyden. The fanaticism and serious moral offenses were unfortunately attributed to the rest of Anabaptism, whose moral life was usually exemplary. Much time had to elapse before the bad name of Münster (where it occurred) was rightly dissociated with the main stream of Anabaptism (ODCC, page 46).

his attitude hardened because of this and the peasants' revolts in Southern Germany. They were suspected of all manner of political intrigue. The following statement by Riedeman coupled with his doctrine that governmental authority "hath its place outside Christ"<sup>74</sup> would further the misunderstanding if read by an opponent.

Thus, we are free from governmental authority in Christ, that is from its punishment, which is God's vengeance; since we are reconciled to him. As soon, however, as a man beginneth again to sin and doeth wrong, he falleth under wrath and the curse and will fall into the hands of the ruling power, that it may execute God's vengeance upon him. That is the punishment outside Christ, into which all they who forsake God fall, and they are under the curse or malediction. For outside Christ the power of government hath still its place as a certain sign that God's wrath doth still continue against sinners and godless men...<sup>75</sup>

It is significant that when Riedeman wishes to make a point or press forward a presupposition, he will use and sometimes force an interpretation upon material from any location in the scriptures if he considers that it assists in supporting his point. He rarely deals with material in the scriptures contradictory to his case.<sup>76</sup> In his argument that the state is essentially evil (from its alleged origin in I Sam. 8) he establishes his case chiefly on this and ignores statements of Jesus and Paul which would damage his view.

Oscar Cullmann in his book, The State in the New Testament<sup>77</sup> deals with material which permits one to have a more complete biblical perspective. It is a misunderstanding, he says, for the Christian to regard his eschatological hope as meaning one should be indifferent to present earthly values. It is more correct if one lets the prospect of the end of all things motivate himself toward dealings with the world. Cullmann asserts that a balance is to be achieved between denial and af-

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74. "Darumb so hat die Oberkeit ausser Christo ihren Bestand, aber nit in Christo." The more commonly heard phrase and a favorite one with the Anabaptists is: "government is outside the perfection of Christ."

75. Rechenschaft, page 240; Confession, page 220 (N.10).

76. In his discussion of baptism, he makes an exception and deals with what he considers a misinterpretation of certain verses by his opponents.

77. Cullmann, Oscar, The State in the New Testament, New York, Scribner's, 1956.

firmation of the world (and the state). This is because on one hand, in Christ the end is fulfilled, and paradoxically enough, the consummation is in the future.<sup>78</sup>

Even though the state (government) is provisional, one finds nowhere in the New Testament a rejection of the state as a matter of principle. Riedeman's other-worldliness, dualistic ideas and commitment to separation as a principle have forced him to do this.<sup>79</sup> Jesus' attitude toward the state is quite different from the eisegetical results Riedeman obtains from I Sam. 8. In Mark 2:15, Mt. 9:10, 10:3, we see Jesus accepting into the circle of disciples both tax collectors (who represent the oppressive government) and zealots (who advocated violent measures for its overthrow). While it is true that the life of the tax-collector, Matthew, was radically redirected, it is also true that some of the zealots - Peter for instance - retained his zealot ideas even to Gethseme, and yet was close to Jesus. Riedeman would never have permitted this in his circle of fellowship.

Jesus did not accept the state as a final institution. Cullmann notes this in several of Jesus' sayings which indicate no particular respect for rulers. Jesus regarded as appropriate the term "collaborationists" as applied to the tax-collectors. He mentions them in the same breath with singers, prostitutes and heathen (Mt. 9:10, 18:17, 21:31).<sup>80</sup> The fact that he put zealots and tax-collectors in the same category indicates that he had a position independent of both.

Jesus teaches, says Cullmann, that the state is a duality; it has no final existence, and yet the demands it makes upon the people under it, which are necessary for its existence, are to be met.

A precise definition of what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God will not be found in the New Testament, though Jesus indicates generally that money is part of that which is to be given to Caesar (Mk. 12). Unlike Riedeman, Jesus does not distinguish between which type of taxes are to be paid.<sup>81</sup>

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78.. Ibid., page 4.

79. "Some wish theological problems to become simple and easy;...we have to clarify not simplify the problems." Ibid., page 5.

80. Ibid., page 19.

81. Riedeman has the following comment about Jesus' command to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" (Mt. 22:15-22): "For Christ, likewise, was speaking of the yearly taxation, which was first imposed when Augustus was emperor and then continued; and at this time there was neither war nor rumors of war. Therefore money was neither gathered nor given

We do not find in Paul an unconditional assent to every demand of the state. Cullmann points out that the state in its position is commissioned to do the opposite of what the believer is permitted; its task is to take vengeance upon evil-doers. Rom. 12:17 instructs the Christian never to repay evil with evil. In spite of this paradox, the Christian is to accept the state. We see then, that while the New Testament speaks of one of the functions of the state as vengeance, that does not make it necessary to conclude that its nature is one of vengeance or wrath (I Sam. 8). Riedeman has assumed that function (actions) necessarily indicates character, an assumption and method he also overexpands about the Christian and his conduct. Bad conduct (if bad enough by Riedeman's rigid morality) indicates one is not a Christian. While it may do this, in many cases it indicates only disobedience.

The state, in taking vengeance, is obeying God. Though the state is provisional in its nature, if it performs its duty of distinguishing between good and evil (which capability it has), God makes use of it for his purposes. The state thus has a neutral character. It is evil only if it departs from its appointed task.

Several things are indicated for the Christian if the state does become tyrannical: (a) he should react positively by continuing proclamation of the Christian message, (b) negatively, in refusing to participate in the idolatry demanded by the state, (c) and to pray, as indicated in I Tim. 2:1,2 and (d) finally to resist to the point of blood.<sup>82</sup>

Riedeman's attempt to explain the nature of the state overlooks three places where Paul describes the cosmic forces behind the state, (I Cor. 2:8, I Cor. 6, Rom. 13:1ff). Here the apostle points out that the Christian should shun national courts of justice because one day he will judge the "angels."<sup>83</sup> Angelic powers (both good and bad) "now operate invisibly behind the state."<sup>84</sup>

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for this purpose" Rechenschaft, page 117; Confession, pages 110-111 (N. 10).

82. Cullmann (N. 77), page 84.

83. Cullmann says "in late Judaism angels imply both good and bad angels." Ibid., page 65.

84. Ibid. Cullmann says that the Greek expression exousiai means "rulers of this world" in profane Greek but world means "invisible powers" to the Jewish readers.

### Calvin: A Brief Comparison

Community of Goods; the right to private property.

It is fortunate in Calvin's, The Acts of the Apostles,<sup>85</sup> there is a thorough exposition of the two passages concerning a community of goods (2:44-45, 4:32-5:10). We are able to find a very direct comparison of the thought of Calvin and Riedeman.

While he does not mention the Hutterites by name, it is certain that the Genevan Reformer has received some information on their activities and ideas, or another group with similar practices. Several times he directly mentions the Anabaptists; from his terms "The Anabaptists have clamored...the two extremes...those...are quite mad," we see that he was in strong disagreement with their ideas about the community of goods.

As did all the Reformers, Calvin feared a disrupting of civil order if such practices went unchecked. There are two extremes which he wished Christians to avoid: (a) that a person of means conceal what he possesses on the pretext of promoting civil order, then cheat the poor and feel righteous about it because he did not openly steal another's property; (b) the Anabaptist error of mixing everything together.

Luke, says Calvin, describes a system of distribution which is really different to the one supposed by the Anabaptists. Taking into account the phrase "had all things in common" might be misconstrued to mean that no one had anything of his own, he points out: this interpretation must be discounted since the purpose of contributing one's property was not to obtain equality among many owners but only that the needs of the poor might be relieved. He says there is a parallel in the Pythagorean proverb, "All things are in common among friends" and what Luke indicates in Acts. The Pythagoreans did not mean a man whom the proverb described was to relinquish the government of his own house or property. "So this community of goods of which Luke speaks does not do away with household government."<sup>86</sup> Since the purpose of the whole endeavor was to relieve "immediate necessity" the Anabaptist interpretation of completely private property is not correct. He adds that monastic groups have misunderstood the passage and have held things in common among themselves while others went hungry.

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85. Calvin, John, The Acts of the Apostles, tr. J. Fraser and W. McDonald, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1965.

86. Calvin, J. (N. 85), page 88.

The community of goods is mentioned the second time in Acts 4:32-5:10, the story of Ananias and Sapphira. The rich sold property and houses in order to relieve the wants of the needy. Calvin understands in both passages in Acts that the motive was a sharing of love and was not a long range plan; it was a reaction to relieve immediate necessity. We are also to understand, he says, that one who sold property sold only part of his possessions. It would have been to no purpose for the rich to become impoverished in helping the poor; the condition of poverty would not really then be alleviated. This is indicated in the conversation between Peter and Ananias, in Peter's question (5:4) "while it remained unsold, did it not remain your own?"

The thrust of Calvin's argument in his interpretation of these two passages is the community of goods was only temporary, existed only to help the poor (and was therefore not a community where all had everything in equal proportion) and rather than speaking against private property, gives examples of the wise and generous stewardship of it.

Baptism: "to you and to your children."

Calvin has written at length on baptism; a sufficient comparison between the Reformer and the Hutterite for our purposes will come out of Calvin's answers to Riedeman's four objections to infant baptism.

The first objection, "in the whole of scripture not a word can be found in which baptism of children is mentioned." Calvin would answer from Acts 2:39; "for to you is the promise..." interpreting the indirect evidence to include children. Directly criticising the Anabaptists, Calvin says this passage "sufficiently refutes them" in their denial of baptism to the children of believers, because they are (by the Anabaptists) not considered as members of the church. The Anabaptists attempt to evade the issue by giving this an allegorical meaning.<sup>87</sup> To them, it means children who are spiritually begotten. Calvin regards this as a "gross presumption"<sup>88</sup> and says the promise 'I will be the God of your seed' is to be taken literally.

To the second objection that "infant baptism was a thing invented by the popes and planted by men," Calvin indicates he rejects the scholastic difference "between the sacraments of the old and new law," as if the former only foreshadowed God's grace, but the latter gave it a present reality."<sup>90</sup>

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87. Riedeman also does this; see chapter on hermeneutics.

88. Calvin (N. 85), page 82.



Riedeman's third and fourth objections actually belong together because for one to have a "good conscience" he must be of sufficient age to know and recognize God. To the matter of the "good conscience" (I Pet. 3: 21) we may look at Calvin's Commentary on Peter.<sup>91</sup> Calvin has comparatively little to say about I Pet. 3:21 and does not relate it to the Anabaptists. His translation of eperootaema as "interrogation" ("The word interrogation here is to be taken for answer or testimony") leaves something to be desired; at this point Riedeman's "Bund" fits better. His interpretation of syneidesis agathae is different, but perhaps acceptable. The "good conscience" before God cannot be "good" until the old man has been reformed and renewed in the righteousness of God. Peter, he says, here sets forth the effect of baptism.

The objection which Riedeman raises about the necessity of being old enough to have a knowledge of and recognize God, Calvin answers directly.<sup>92</sup> "It is not necessary," he says, "that faith and repentance always precede baptism." It is only required that these be present in those capable of them; the reason being that "it will be sufficient if infants, when they have grown up, exhibit the power of their baptism." Calvin maintains there is nothing absurd in this because of the equivalence of circumcision and baptism. This is so, he says, because Moses and all the prophets taught that circumcision was a sign of repentance in Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4. Paul maintains circumcision is a sign of faith in Rom. 4:11, and for these reasons infants are not to be excluded. Calvin says if one carefully considers the evidence, one will conclude that the sign of baptism is to be taken from circumcision. Calvin's interpretive method then, is to ask the two basic questions: "what does the text say?" and "what does the text mean?"

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89. Calvin, ICR 4.14.23.

90. For further information on the difference between Roman Catholic and the Reformers' ideas about baptism, see chart comparing baptismal views of Riedeman, Zwingli and Calvin, pages 100 and 101. It is evident that the Reformers reworked the theology of the sacraments to a large extent.

91. Calvin, John, Commentary on Hebrews and I and II Peter, ed. D. and T. Torrance, tr. W.B. Johnston, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1963, pages 295-97.

92. Calvin, John, Theological Treatises, tr. J.K.S. Reid, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1954, page 134.

Government; the coercive character of magistracy does not hinder its recognition (ICR 4.20.7).

Here also we find a direct comment on the Anabaptist doctrine of "government being outside the perfection of Christ." Those who "rail against this holy ministry (government)" as a thing offensive to Christianity have failed to listen to the "many testimonies of scripture." Calvin considers that such ideas amount to reviling against God himself, because God's ministry cannot be reproached without dishonoring the one who gave it.

Probably because Calvin was so committed to a stable social order as a basis for the effective work of the church,<sup>93</sup> and because he so feared Anabaptist ideas would bring civil and social chaos, he could say, "these folks do not just reject the magistrates, but cast off God that he may not reign over them."<sup>94</sup> If one considers a statement such as Riedeman makes about "being free from government" (see statement in connection with N. 74, this chapter), Calvin's reaction would be not at all unexpected. The gulph of thought between the Anabaptists and the Reformers was very deep; it was an extremely sensitive subject. Calvin even turns their supporting verse, I Sam. 8:7 back on them, saying, "if the Lord truly said this of his people Israel because they refused Samuel's rule, why will it be less truly said to-day of those who let themselves rage against all government ordained by God?"<sup>95</sup>

Calvin takes in a very serious way the verse in Rom. 13:1 which says there is no power except from God. We know that Calvin's basic presuppositions were inclined toward monarchy and aristocracy. In ICR 4.20.26 he says obedience to bad kings is required in scripture. "Scripture abounds with such passages." He makes a reference to the Schleitheim Confession of 1527 (the definitive confession for the Anabaptists) as he describes how the Anabaptists are "forbidden to take kingdoms or governments." In ICR 4.20.26 reviewing all the possible disadvantages of a bad king, he comes to the conclusion that, nevertheless, the people must obey their commands and

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93. Luther criticised the Anabaptists "because they wandered about preaching the Gospel, neglecting family, education, profession..." Luther felt that there could be no effective spreading of the Gospel as long as anything affected the basic vehicle of Christian education, the family unit.

94. Calvin, ICR 4.20.7.

95. Ibid.

listen to their word. Calvin's convictions about the divine appointment of kings are as deep as Riedeman's are concerning the inherent evil character of government. While Calvin is not entirely free from a tendency to overstress the divine character of government, his treatment of the large amount of scripture he uses reflects sounder interpretive principles.

## CHAPTER SIX

## Riedeman's Hermeneutics

Silesia (Schlesien) in the time of Riedeman.

If one looks at a map<sup>1</sup> of modern Europe, he will find the town of Jelenia Gora some 20 km. (12 mi.) north of the Czech border in what today is Poland. Written under the present name will be found the German name, Hirschberg.<sup>2</sup> In the old Herzogtum of Schlesien around the year 1500, Hirschberg occupied the lower point of a triangle in relation to three cities: Görlitz, some 60 km. (36 mi.) to the northwest, Liegnitz 40 km. (24 mi.) almost directly north, and Breslau (today the Polish Wrocław) 90 km. (54 mi.) to the northeast. Gold, silver and wine were produced in the region.<sup>3</sup>

What has happened to the modern town of Jelenia Gora is typical of the region's continuous history. Since the end of World War II, this territory, which prior to 1939 formed the eastern most part of Germany, has been in Polish hands and is considered by the Polish to be part of their country. During the entire history of the area, it has changed hands between the Germans and Poles or both have lived there at the same time.

Breslau was established around the year 1000 by Slavs and it was an episcopal see subordinate to the ci-

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1. Rand-McNally GmbH, 1965.
  2. The English translation is "Stag Mountain;" one could speculate that the name was given because of the presence of deer in the Sudeten mountain range immediately south of the town. This group of mountains, together with the Böhmerwald form a geographical barrier in the shape of a "c" which encircles the Czech capitol of Prag (Praha) and follows much of the present day border of Western Czechoslovakia.
  3. Pestalozzi, Th., Historischer Schul-Atlas, 2 Auflage, Aarau, Sauerländer Verlag, 1931, page 73. As if to testify further to this fact, a town a few miles north of Hirschberg bore the name Goldberg.

ty of Gniezno. In 1163, it became the capitol of the Duchy of Silesia and was ruled by the Poles.

The first German settlers came from Flanders at some point before the end of the twelfth century. It is thought that Cistercian monks were active in the development of the area. In the thirteenth century there was an extensive and systematic colonization by the Germans. The method was to establish a central town in each territory, surrounding it with villages composed of German settlers obtained from more western regions.

In the Mongol (Tartar) invasion of 1241, the country was devastated; in 1242 Breslau was sacked. This did not affect the continuing process of colonization. Breslau was re-established as a German town under a legal system borrowed from Magdeburg. Lower Silesia<sup>4</sup> became largely populated with Germans. After this, it became a member of the Hanseatic League and enjoyed a large trade with Eastern and Western Europe.

One could reasonably expect Breslau to be a cosmopolitan city, since it not only engaged in a large trade by virtue of its position on the Oder River, but was situated on a road which went directly to Kiev, some 1200 km. (720 mi.) to the east, or in the west, 700 km. (420 mi.) to Cologne through Leipzig and Erfurt.

The aristocratic Caspar Schwenckfeld, converted to Lutheranism in 1518, was a major exponent of the Lutheran reform in Silesia in 1522, as he was courtier in the ducal court at Liegnitz, 24 mi. north of Hirschberg. The Reformation had come to Breslau the previous year, made possible partly by the deep involvement of the city in the humanist ferment of the early sixteenth century.<sup>5</sup> This area, which had been Roman Catholic since Christianity was introduced became increasingly Lutheran; by the year 1546, ten years before the death of Riedeman, the area in which he was born was mainly Lutheran.

In spite of the fact that Breslau was a leading city in the Lutheran Reformation and that the city of Liegnitz was situated on an important trade route with it, there is no information to indicate that Riedeman had anything other than an uneventful and provincial upbringing in a small Catholic town. There is, as far as is known, no information to show that he was sympathetic to Lutheran ideas before he came under the Anabaptist influence. We can find no unusual influence in

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4. Called so because it was lower in altitude, even though it lay somewhat north and west of Upper Silesia, from whence the Oder River flowed downward through Lower Silesia to the Baltic.
  5. Williams, G.H., The Radical Reformation, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1962, page 108. Breslau was called the "student's paradise" and had seven founda-

his early life that would affect his interpretation or presuppositions. The conclusion then, is that four known factors played a large role in forming his ideas: (a) his Roman Catholic boyhood in a small German town at the foot of the Sudeten mountains; (b) his intercourse with and conversion to Anabaptism in Upper Austria, probably under the preaching of Hans Hut and Wolfgang Brandhuber (this is thought to have occurred in the years 1527-29; he would be 21-23 years of age at that time); (c) his profession as a shoemaker<sup>6</sup> would normally indicate a meager academic training (he may have known a little Latin from the Catholic Church, but very likely not much theology; the lack of education was a factor in his anti-intellectual attitude, and it would be quite natural for a converted cobbler to be more concerned with the practical and ethical side of the Christian life rather than the theoretical and intellectual problems); (d) his continual contact with Lutherans after he became an Anabaptist. Schwenckfeld, along with Riedeman, made the complaint that Lutheranism had visibly failed to change the moral life of its adherents. They accepted the fact that this was most apparent among the simple parishioners and working class. It led Schwenckfeld finally to reject Lutheranism for what he called the "royal way" of spiritualism and mysticism. It is clear that Riedeman took a very hard line toward the Lutherans because of what he felt was a weakness in their ethical life. A strong reaction against the Lutherans (and at this point Catholics also) would lead him to seek another alternative, one which he already had in Anabaptism. A reinforcement of his convictions would be inevitable. There appear to be, then, no unusual influences from the area in which he was born, nor in his early life. The ones we are aware of are clear and would account very naturally for the ideas and interpretation in the Rechenschaft.

#### A Review of Riedeman's Hermeneutics

Because chapter three is a detailed analysis of Riedeman's approach and method to I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1, the summaries found at the end of those sections will not be repeated here. The following is a

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tions for paying the salaries of teachers out of the town revenues (Lindsay, T.M., A History of the Reformation, vol. I (2 vols) sec. ed., Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1907, page 53).

6. "Ein Schuster aus Hirschberg" (Friedmann, R. & Mais, Adolf, Die Schriften der Huterischen Taufergemeinschaft, 1529-1667, Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 1965, page 123).

brief review of his method of interpretation. It will be found that Riedeman does these things consistently:

- (a) He often ignores or fails to see the meaning which Paul intends when he writes a certain passage.
- (b) If there is an idea for which he wishes to give a biblical reference, he thinks it is necessary only to find a verse which has words indicating the same subject, rather than the same context.<sup>8</sup> Neither the local situation nor the person to whom the words were written are a limiting factor for him.
- (c) Though he is concerned for the welfare of his congregation, he (unconsciously?) places doctrine and ideas before the welfare of the people (cf. Calvin, end of chapter three).
- (d) Many of his references are cited without taking into account the time in which they were said. He applies, for instance, II Cor. 6:14-16 in a backward direction to support a statement about the relationship of God and man in the Garden of Eden (the relationship he describes is also incorrect).
- (e) Because he is under the influence of the pre-suppositions mentioned, he consistently overdraws the doctrine of the pure church and the principles of separation.
- (f) Generally, he has no appreciation of history and uses historical data only where he thinks it will support his case. Because he does not thoroughly check the facts which he does have, he often fails to understand or use them correctly.
- (g) One of the most consistent failures he makes is to overlook the full meaning and content of a particular passage. An example would be the several facts he ignores in I Sam. 8 about the "origin" of human government.

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- 7. Riedeman's interpretation of I Cor. 5:12 (where he confuses ecclesiastical discipline with legal judgment) is an example. Also, Riedeman interprets the parable of Lazarus and Dives (Lk. 16:19-26) to mean that a Christian cannot go to court. In the five times he refers to I Cor. 5:9-13 there is only one reference which presents no problem.
  - 8. "A text without a context is only a pretext" (A.B. Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible, Eerdmans, 1963, page 112).

Riedeman's method of interpretation in his presuppositions.

In his presentation of God as truth and power, Riedeman is not as much concerned to find truth as he is to take what he believes to be the truth and set it over against its opposite: untruth, deceit, falseness, etc. He is more concerned to fight and eradicate evil as he is to engage in correct exegesis.

When Riedeman speaks of sin, he agrees with the Reformers that original sin is inherited, but he also shows the original and unconventional concept that original sin may be identified with Paul's thorn in the flesh (II Cor. 12:7).

Riedeman follows the Reformed school of thought concerning the inability of natural man to bring about his own salvation. The difference in his thought comes with the effect sin has on the effort to live the obedient life of discipleship. His conviction is that disobedience can undo everything, even the union of the believer with God. He measures and interprets every action in life by the requirement of perfect obedience, and has a very narrow definition of what constitutes obedience.

The dividing of marriage into three steps or categories of importance shows a certain mystical influence.

"Slavery and sonship" (the presupposition on the two covenants) interprets the Old and New Testament to say that the "old covenant" was given to Israel without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Technically, this is true; Riedeman makes it appear, however, that the Holy Spirit engaged in no contact whatsoever with the "slaves" under the old covenant. To maintain this, one must overlook or refuse to see a great deal of activity of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Riedeman places too much value on the Pentecost event and sets it out of proportion to the rest of the Holy Spirit's work. It is presented in scripture as a fulfillment of a work begun long before; to Riedeman it is the initial event in a completely new thing. We see here, as well as many other places in the Rechenschaft, the persistent theme of an Hellenistic conflict between light and darkness - "that which is dark and imperfect must come to an end."<sup>9</sup>

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9. Rechenschaft, page 65; Confession, page 64 (N. 10, chap. 4). Williams says, "The Anabaptists were particularly given to typology in terms of shadow and light" (Radical Reformation, N. 5, page 830).



His interpretation of the new covenant is important; Gen 21:9-13 and Gal. 4:28-31 describes the covenant in terms of the two women, Sarah and Hagar. Riedeman correctly refers to Sarah as the figure of the new covenant, but places a time limit on its beginning, which is Pentecost. Thus, for him, no one in the Old Testament ever participated in any kind of relationship to God except through the Law of the Old Testament covenant; the old covenant can never be anything more than a covenant of servitude.<sup>10</sup>

The principle of interpretation followed in describing the church is restriction; the essence and major characteristic of the church becomes restricted to one thing even though many others are presented in scripture. He follows the Anabaptist principle of "restoration" and purification of the existing church so that it approximates the early New Testament church. As such, this reflects a backward-looking nostalgic attitude.<sup>11</sup>

With reference to the community of goods, the Anabaptists have denied any direct connection with monasticism. The similarity, especially in the Hutterites, to monastic form and the presence to some degree, of monastic ideas such as mysticism and dualism make it impossible to deny a coincidence and even a strong resemblance to the monasticism of the sixteenth century. The description of a Hutterite community as monasticism on a Protestant and family basis is a true one. For these reasons, then, it is said that there was a monastic influence exercising itself in Riedeman's interpretation in the community of goods. Asceticism and the concept of two separate and distinct orders of existence ("the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of Christ") strengthen this evaluation.

As he has restricted the scriptural definition of the church to one thing, Riedeman employs the opposite method in his description of the origin of the commun-

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10. "To sum up, the Anabaptists continually distinguished between the covenant of servitude and that of sonship" (Ibid., page 832).
  11. Ibid., page 97. The Anabaptist view of history is thought to have played a part in the development of their church view. "Their philosophy of history was a kind of primitivism which sought not the creation of something new, but the restitution of something old. It was their sober aspiration to restore the 'true church' which in apostolic days had enjoyed a glorious existence but in subsequent history had fallen into a state of corruption." (E. Waltner, "The Anabaptist Conception of the Church," MQR 25:1951, pages 8-9, quoting F.H. Littell).

ity of goods. Taking a passage from Gen. 3:6 he expands it far beyond its intended meaning; it is made to say (counter to the rest of scripture) that the source of all sin is in "wrong taking" in the Garden of Eden.<sup>12</sup>

A third interpretive principle he uses as a basis for the community of goods is the model given by the structure of the Trinity.<sup>13</sup> If the results of his interpretation of this presupposition were expressed in one thought it would be: he materializes the spiritual principle in II Cor. 8:14 by embodying it in the community of goods.

Riedeman's four objections to infant baptism indicate the direction his interpretive principles take: with the requirement of absolute purity of the church uppermost in his mind, it is easy to understand how he can regard the scriptures as containing nothing new on infant baptism. He would be loath to accept it if more distinct evidence could be shown, because "God will not break his order"<sup>14</sup> (of salvation). For him, any new exegetical evidence supporting infant baptism is out of the question.<sup>15</sup> Next he makes an attempt to show that infant baptism is historically objectionable from its origin in the "godless" Roman Church; research shows it was practiced before the western church became distinctly Roman. Objections three and four are related to the same problem; one must be of sufficient age to understand

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12. The source of sin, as explained in the section on community of goods is pride, a far more serious offence than the taking of a piece of fruit.
  13. Because "the Son, (creator of the universe!) has nothing in himself, but has it in common with the Father.... We are therefore to have all things in common as other Christians."
  14. Rechenschaft, page 192; Confession, page 177 (N, 10, chap. 5): "und sein Ordnung selber mit brechen..."
  15. How unwilling Riedeman is to consider any new evidence is seen by his comment on the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:25-34: "Also auch zu Philipp der Stockmeister, der mit seinem ganzen Haus glaubig und getauft ward, von dem oft viel geredt wird, und ihren Greuel oft damit bezeugen wollen, als ob auch Kinder taufet wären. Meldet hie der Text klar, dass er sie in sein Haus nahm und an Tisch setzt, auch dass sie ihm Gottes Wort sagten. Da ward er glaubig und sein ganzes Haus und liess sich taufen und freuet sich sehr, dass er in Gott war glaubig worden. So nun hie die Kinder die Wunder Gottes vernahmen, die Predig von Christo hörten und glaubten, so sind sie auch getauft worden, wo aber nit, so seind sie auch nit getauft worden, und wird nun nichts damit zu beweisen sein" (Rechenschaft, pages 193-94;

baptism for it to have any meaning. The existence of strong indirect evidence to infant baptism in the New Testament raises a problem for his method here.

His interpretation of government rises out of an inaccurate, presuppositionally governed view of I Sam. 8:7-22. Because of other presuppositions in his outlook (dualism, disdain for created things, the two kingdoms, the pure church) he cannot accept the world nor its earthly responsibilities of which human government is an integral part. This rejection of human government is quite consistent with the rest of his ideas and is a logical extension of them.

His main interpretive error is (a) that he has overlooked too many things contained in the passage which do not support his interpretation of them, (b) the passage from which he draws such far-reaching conclusions on the nature of government is too small and isolated to support them; it is only possible to obtain a doctrine from a large amount of significant verses.

#### Analysis of the Scriptural References.

The number of biblical references which Riedeman makes use of is usually reported as "around 1800." The number of times he makes a scriptural reference, including repetition of the reference in other places, is hermeneutically significant, and comes to a much higher figure. For instance, he refers to the "great commission" at the end of Mt. 28 some thirty-eight times. Figures showing the number of individual references have been recounted and come to approximately 2950 instead of the previously reported 1800. The number and percentages appear as follows:

Old Testament	764	25.9%
Apocrypha	100	3.4%
New Testament	<u>2085</u>	<u>70.7%</u>
Total	2949	100.0%

Thus, about one out of every four is from the Old Testament, one in thirty-three comes from the Apocrypha, and seven out of every ten are from the New Testament. The seemingly small number from the Apocrypha is deceptive; several of his presuppositions rely heavily on this book.<sup>16</sup>

In the Old Testament there are five passages which Riedeman has referred to more often than any other:

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Confession, page 178 N.10, chap. 4).  
16. See discussion of Apocrypha which follows.

- (a) Genesis 3: out of 40 references to this chapter, 24 are confined to the first 12 verses. These tell the story of Adam and Eve's "wrong taking" in the garden, indicating this chapter plays a significant role in justifying his thought on the community of goods.
- (b) Genesis 17: of the 31 times this is cited, only three do not deal with verses 1-14, the account of God making the covenant with Abraham. It also contains the command to circumcise. Riedeman regards this passage as allegory:

Therefore the people which came out of the loins of Abraham is no more than an allegory of the true seed<sup>17</sup>....Because it was but an allegory of the true seed...<sup>18</sup>

The allegorical method here is an unconscious attempt to get around the very real problem this passage would present to the Anabaptists if they had to take it in the literal sense.<sup>19</sup> Allegorical interpretation originated among pagan Greeks, was taken over by the Jews of Alexandria from where it entered the church, reigned supreme and was not questioned until the Reformers offered the direct, plain or literal sense of the scripture as the best means of obtaining its meaning. One of Riedeman's objections to baptism of infants was on the ground that it was a historical anomaly introduced by the Popes; he should have levelled this accusation at the Anabaptist's action of borrowing the allegory from the Roman Church. George Williams says the Anabaptist use of allegory corresponds directly to the "several hermeneutical means and dispensational schemes"<sup>20</sup> to make use

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- 17. "Demnach das Volk, so aus den Lenden Abrahams kommen, ist nit mehr denn ein Figur des recht geschaffnen Samens..." (Rechenschaft, page 196; Confession, page 181).
  - 18. "Weil es nur ein Figur des rechten Samens war..." (Rechenschaft, page 197; Confession, page 181). See also note 62, chap. 4, for a comparison with the use of allegory by Pilgram Marbeck.
  - 19. To interpret literally is to ascertain the meaning of words and sentences in their normal, customary usage. Paul indicates when he uses allegory.
  - 20. William, (N. 5), page 828.

- of and yet distinguish the OT from the NT.
- (c) Deut. 5 contains the Ten Commandments; 12 of 16 references have all or part of them.
  - (d) Deut. 12:1-3: is a command to "destroy all the places where the (heathen) nations you shall possess shall serve their gods;" it is found 5 times. The theme is separation of Jehovah's people from the surrounding environment.
  - (e) Isa. 61:1,2: Riedeman uses this 9 times. It says simply, "The Spirit of the Lord...has appointed me to bring good tidings."

The Reformers and Protestants of today would criticize Riedeman for his use of more than one hundred references to the Apocrypha. The Reformers decided very quickly to give the Apocrypha an extra-canonical status because they had the Hebrew Bible to compare with Jerome and because they rejected some of the doctrines which the Roman Church had derived from the Apocrypha.

About one out of twenty-nine (or 3.5%) of his references come from the Apocrypha; they are scattered. II Esdras with twenty-one references, Wisdom of Solomon with thirty-one, and Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) with twenty-eight, are the most used. Together with references from the Old and New Testament, these verses form a part in his presuppositions, especially on sin, the community of goods and government. Hermeneutically, they have simply been read by Riedeman and incorporated into his thinking and quotations.

In the New Testament, Riedeman's favorite books are Matthew, with two hundred and forty references; John, two hundred and ninety; Romans, two hundred and fifty five and Acts, one hundred and sixty six. These figures show Riedeman's choice of scripture was well within the normal pattern of the Anabaptists. His use of the New Testament compared to the Old Testament is about four to one, and out of a total of 2083 verses used from the New Testament, approximately 778 or about 40% come from the Gospels. If Acts (written by Luke) is added,<sup>21</sup> the total rises to 944, or close to 50%. This is a pattern to be expected in Anabaptist hermeneutics. One often reads that "the Anabaptists derive a significant portion of their theology from the Gospels."

The most often quoted passages in the gospel of Matthew are in chapters 5, 10, 26 and 28.

- (a) Chapter 5 contains the Sermon on the Mount;

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21. Acts should be included since it, from a functional standpoint, completes the founding of the church.

Riedeman makes use of it some 40 times. The references are equally distributed throughout the chapter. This chapter is one of the most basic for Anabaptist theology.

- (b) Matthew 10, cited some 26 times, contains the account of the calling of the disciples and their being sent out to preach, heal, raise the dead and cast out demons (verse 8). Verses 9-42 (end of the chapter) contains instructions as to how the disciples are to conduct themselves in relation to the outside world. There is present here a strong current of thought which would undoubtedly be interpreted by the Anabaptists in a separatist fashion; verses 11, 13, 15 ("shake the dust from your feet"). Verses 16-23 speak of the disciples witnessing before courts, on trial for their faith, and the message of the gospel dividing father and son. Verse 24 is a command to imitate the master. Verses 26-33 speaks of darkness and light. Verses 34-39 again takes up the division Christ can bring into a family.
- (c) Matthew 26: all but one of the 19 references deal with the Last Supper, Jesus and the disciples in Gethsemane.
- (d) Matthew 28: 32 of the 40 references deal with the "great commission" verses 18-20.

The picture of Riedeman's use of Matthew is quite as expected; the Sermon on the Mount, discipleship, the rejection of the outside world, the gospel division of a household, the suffering of Christ and the Great Commission.

Riedeman's use of Luke (154 references) involves mainly:

- (a) Chapter 9 (19 references), verse 23 and verses 49-62; all but one reference is related to following Jesus and relations with heathens who would not hear the gospel.
- (b) 14:33, cited 6 times, has as its subject, the renunciation of all one has.
- (c) Chapter 22 (21 references), deals with the Last Supper and Jesus in Gethsemane.

The Gospel of John is the most quoted of any book in the New Testament (290 times). Its most quoted verses are:

- (a) 1:12 (9 times). The subject is "receiving Christ." It should be noted that the thought continues into verse 13 and prevents an "Arminian" interpretation if verse 13 is included with 12. Riedeman does not, however.

- (b) 15:1-7; the verses involved with this passage are cited 19 times. The subjects involving obedience, fruit bearing and unfruitful branches being thrown into the fire - all practical subjects - are dealt with.
- (c) 16:13-15 (12 times) is important because it involves the work of the Spirit in guiding the Christian in truth (verse 13). This was the final source of authority in understanding the scripture for the Anabaptists.

The most frequently quoted section in Acts is 4:31-35, referred to ten times; it involves the community of goods.

There are four chapters in the much quoted (255 times) letter to the Romans which deserve attention:

- (a) 5:12-14 (11 times) the references here are theological in nature and deal with the origin and introduction of sin into the world. One is used with the idea that in the first sin, Adam and Eve "broke marriage with their creator," the other refers to "wrong taking," the basis for Riedeman's teaching against private property. Both represent a misunderstanding of that for which they are used.
- (b) 8:1-10 (6 times) centers around the idea that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ (as Riedeman defines having it) cannot be true servants.
- (c) Verses from 13:1-8 are cited 43 times. The central thought in this passage is "let every person be subject to the governing authorities." (8:1) These citations are involved in his discussion of government.

Riedeman does not cite verses from Philemon or Jude. We do not know why and perhaps the reason is not significant. Jude contains warnings against dangerous doctrines spread by false teachers who "did not have the Spirit." It also denounces the moral life of these false teachers. As such, it would have been interesting to Riedeman. In addition to the previous gospels and letters mentioned, the following references in scripture are worth mentioning:

- (a) II Cor. 6:14-18 (25 times); see chapter three.
- (b) Gal. 4:4-7 (10 times) is concerned with a distinction very important to Riedeman, slavery and sonship.
- (c) Eph. 2:1-13 (9 times) reiterates the fact that man has nothing to do with his salvation; this is related to the presupposition on sin.
- (d) 12 times in Phil. 2:5-11, Riedeman makes refer-

- ence to the exalted state of Jesus who took the form of a servant, but is now exalted.
- (e) I Tim. 5:22, cited 6 times, contains a warning to "keep yourselves pure."
  - (f) James 1:17,18 (8 times) contains the familiar and important phrase "the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." The theme of light and darkness is a very important one for Riedeman.
  - (g) I Pet. 1:5 is cited 12 times because it refers to those who by "God's power are guarded through faith...." God's power is Riedeman's first presupposition.
  - (h) I Pet. 2:13-17, cited 14 times, contains the familiar command "be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution," and is related to his ideas on government.
  - (i) I Pet. 3:21, the famous verse about baptism being the "appeal to God for a good conscience" is cited 8 times.
  - (j) II Pet. 1:3 (16 times) refers again to the divine power which has been granted Christians.

Having seen in chapter three how Riedeman treats the two Corinthian passages and makes them a justification for separatism, we then saw the presuppositions which lay behind it. In this chapter we have endeavored to see what early influences, if any, might have played a part in forming these presuppositions. After reviewing his interpretive method we then investigated how it applied to his presuppositions. An analysis of his scriptural references show that he has cited portions of scripture in the Rechenschaft which support his presuppositions. There has appeared a very definite pattern of choosing and rejecting passages. We turn now to a final principle which was an integral part of the Anabaptist system.

#### Christocentric Biblical Interpretation.

A criticism which the church historian Roland Bainton makes of the Neo-orthodox is applicable to the Anabaptists, for there exists an interesting parallel. Bainton said the attempt to "derive everything from Christ, including religious knowledge, salvation and ethics,"<sup>22</sup> can lead to certain exaggerations.

In the Rechenschaft,<sup>23</sup> Riedeman says that the people in the Old Testament "did not know God in their

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22. Bainton, Roland, Studies in the Reformation, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1964, page 114.

23. Rechenschaft, page 215; Confession, page 197 (N.10,



heart." He concedes that a few prophets knew him, but in general, the people of Israel did not because "as yet there was no distinction between the child and the servant," and Christ had not yet come. This is certainly Christological interpretation with an exaggeration; his assumption is that God was working in only a very limited way when not working through Christ. He says, furthermore, "...circumcision and baptism are two different things, and as Christ surpassed Abraham, doth baptism circumcision."<sup>24</sup> The hyper-Christological interpretation is present and the parallel Riedeman draws is a very unequal one; other passages of scripture (Col. 2:11,12) present direct evidence that there is an equality between the two. Indirect evidence indicates it also.

We have a precise description of the difference between the Anabaptists and the Reformers in the words of Krahn (Menno Simons, Karlsruhe, 1936, page 108): the interpretation of the Anabaptists was specifically Christocentric, while that of the Reformers was theocentric. This means that the Anabaptists with their limiting of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and exaggerating it in the New Testament are guilty to the same degree of limiting the Trinity.

One must of course interpret Christocentrically, but in a manner which gives full participation to linguistic, historical, theological, cultural and homiletical principles. These are not invalid simply because one wishes to be "Christocentric."

We read time and time again that for the Anabaptists the final word on church ordinances and Christian ethics could come only from the New Testament. Riedeman maintained this, but there are several important exceptions:

- (a) There is extensive use of the Old Testament in establishing the basis of separation (not just in verses requoted in the New Testament). The idea of God separating a people unto himself, which Riedeman discusses at great length, is directly an Old Testament concept.
- (b) The movement of Israel from the bondage of Egypt to the promised land is an idea much discussed by Riedeman as a basis for separation. The land, the glory, the rule and later kingdom are a sign and a figure (allegory) of the coming of Christ and the King.
- (c) The concept of God (power and truth) which Riedeman presents is largely the powerful and holy Jehovah of the Old Testament.

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ch. 5).

24. Rechenschaft, pages 180,181; Confession, page 196

- (d) Without his involved exegesis of the "covenant of servitude" in the Old Testament, the contrast between it and the "covenant of sonship" would not be necessary.
- (e) The community of goods is dependent upon his interpretation in the Old Testament of "wrong taking" (Adam and Eve taking the apple). His evaluation of the consequences of the fall of man leads to the doctrine that created things are temporal and therefore evil.
- (f) The presupposition about the two covenants is directly related to the problem of baptism. If Riedeman held that the two covenants were continuous and circumcision were equal to baptism, then it would not be necessary to discuss baptism.
- (g) The problem with government "being outside the realm of Christ" is raised by his interpretation of I Sam. 8, where God, according to him, gave the institution of government in wrath and anger.

The conclusion here is that the Old Testament is very much implicated and involved in "ordinances, ethics, faith and life" in Riedeman's thinking. If he did not have such specific interpretation of certain Old Testament passages, certain problems would not occur in his New Testament interpretation. Because of the way he has dealt with the Old Testament, further interpretation is necessary in the New Testament. In no wise may one say that he "starts with the New Testament," producing a theology and a way of life which are independent of the Old Testament.

Table Indicating Number of References to Individual Books of OT, Apocrypha, and NT.

Genesis	187	Judith	-
Exodus	55	Book of Esther	-
Leviticus	20	Wisdom of Solomon	31
Numbers	14	Ecclesiasticus	28
Deuteronomy	124	(Sirach)	
Joshua	18	Baruch	4
Judges	12	The Letter of Jeremiah	-
Ruth	-		
I Samuel	33	Azariah and the Three Young Men	-
II Samuel	6		
I Kings	4	Susanna	-
II Kings	2	Bel and the Dragon	-
I Chronicles	-	Manasseh	-
II Chronicles	13	I Maccabees	6
Ezra	8	II Maccabees	-
Nehemiah	1		
Esther	-	Total	100
Job	1		
Psalms	47	Matthew	240
Proverbs	10	Mark	94
Ecclesiastes	-	Luke	154
Song of Solomon	2	John	288
Isaiah	96	Acts	166
Jeremiah	48	Romans	255
Lamentation	-	I Corinthians	141
Ezekiel	12	II Corinthians	75
Daniel	5	Galatians	79
Hosea	14	Ephesians	99
Joel	10	Philippians	30
Amos	11	Colossians	44
Obadiah	-	I Thessalonians	8
Jonah	-	II Thessalonians	9
Micah	3	I Timothy	29
Nahum	-	II Timothy	10
Habakkuk	-	Titus	18
Zephaniah	-	Philemon	-
Haggai	-	Hebrews	110
Zechariah	1	James	35
Malachi	7	I Peter	95
		II Peter	27
Total	764	I John	48
		II John	8
I Esdras	4	III John	1
II Esdras	21	Jude	-
Tobit	6	Revelation	22
		Total	2085

## CHAPTER SEVEN

ImplicationsBrief Review of the Anabaptist Situation.

Except for the Münsterites,<sup>1</sup> who showed important dissimilarities to evangelical Anabaptism,<sup>2</sup> and advocated physical violence against their opponents, the rest of Anabaptism was concerned to present a gentle and peaceful appearance to the outside world. Even with their peaceful methods, it should be recognised that they were revolutionaries in the most complete sense. Beginning with the Swiss Brethren in Zürich in 1525, the four hundred year history of Anabaptism has desired a complete reorientation of church, state and society. There were some differences between Anabaptists,<sup>3</sup> but they were so basically similar in doctrine and method that one could say Anabaptism wanted to promote this program of radical reorientation out of an interpretation of the Bible which involved a mentality, presuppositions and hermeneutical method much the same as Riedeman. Comparison with other main stream Anabaptists (Blaurock, Grebel, Hubmaier, Marbeck, Menno Simons) will confirm this.

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1. A good description of the Münster debacle appears in Williams, George, Radical Reformation, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1962, pages 362-381.
  2. Anabaptism, per se, is usually divided into three groups: (1) Evangelical Anabaptists, whose norm is the New Testament and who are committed to a disciplined, separated church; men such as Blaurock, Grebel, Hubmaier, Marbeck, Menno Simons; (2) contemplative Anabaptists such as Denck or Hetzer who emphasized the "inner word" and (3) Revolutionary Anabaptists such as Münster (Williams, G., "Studies in the Radical Reformation, 1517-1618: A Bibliographical Survey of Research since 1939" Church History, 26:1957, page 72).
  3. Balthasar Hubmaier of Waldshut believed in the magistrates' use of the sword. Pilgram Marbeck advocated and had better relations with the Reformers than most Anabaptists. There were differences among the early Mennonites in the Netherlands over the practice of "shunning" a disobedient person.

We are told by Mennonites today that we owe a debt to the Anabaptist movement for three things; (a) the voluntary church, (b) the separation of church and state, (c) religious liberty. We do, in that they were among the first to advocate these principles and paid dearly in suffering and lives to have them. They should be given credit because in their time they were the clearest voice advocating them. In Geneva, Calvin worked in this direction struggling from 1542-1554 for the right of the pastors to excommunicate offenders independently of the approval of the city council. The feeling today is that these three things came to Puritan England and Scotland from the influence of Calvin and even Zwingli.<sup>4</sup>

The Reformers were not only very brutal to the Anabaptists, but because of a fear that Anabaptist ideas, if followed, would result in a breakdown of order in society,<sup>5</sup> became very prejudiced in their writings about them. In a measure, the Anabaptists brought it upon themselves by imprecise and enthusiastic statements. This does not excuse the Reformers who had the benefit of better training and should have, on certain occasions investigated them more thoroughly.

Both sides showed that they were men of their age.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Roland Bainton affirms this: "they were not however, transmitted to us by the Anabaptists, but rather by the Puritan revolution and the French Revolution ....in the present state of research it appears most likely that the English Puritans and Anabaptists grew from the same sources. One was Zwingli ...and English Puritanism was in close touch with Zürich....and the other was the New Testament" (*Studies in the Reformation*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1964, page 199).
  5. The Anabaptists made many statements which would lead the Reformers to think this. Riedeman's idea that Christians under the rule of the Holy Spirit needed no secular government would be considered close to anarchy by Luther and Calvin and especially so by Zwingli. Luther felt that anything which injured society would affect the stability of the family, and thus a very important avenue of Christian education. It was not uncommon for an Anabaptist to leave the "earthly cares of a family" to go "preach the Gospel."
  6. The Anabaptists showed lack of maturity and education; the Reformers monarchial and conservative presuppositions.

Since the views of the Reformers were generally given great weight, the prejudiced attitude continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Only now has non-Mennonite scholarship begun to try to evaluate them impartially and examine original sources to any great extent.

### Implications for the Hutterites

It was the genuine hope of the Hutterites in the sixteenth century that their withdrawal from society into separate colonies would exert a great influence on society as a whole. Probably part of that expectation came from their realization of the impact of Roman Catholic monasticism over some twelve hundred years.<sup>7</sup> If Protestantism had not subsequently become fragmented, or an increase in religious toleration had not occurred, or widespread secularization made possible by an increasingly technological society not taken place, this might have been a reasonable hope. It should not be considered as unkind or unduly critical to say that in the twentieth century, a Hutterite community attracts attention because it is odd, nor should it appear as harsh in evaluating them to conclude that "it is an easy way out of the complexities and dilemmas of our modern societies."<sup>8</sup> A Hutterite community today means what it meant in the sixteenth century; commitment to a point of view which allows little or no progress in re-interpretation of the scriptures and a view of the church which looks back to the "church of the apostles." On the one hand, the self-sufficiency, honesty, industry, gentleness and sincere piety of the Hutterites are to be deeply admired. Such qualities were rare in their day, as in ours. We cannot but reflect sadness that they understood so inadequately the concept that Christians are to be the "salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13) in addition to being the "light of the world" (Mt. 5:14). Mt. 5:13-20 is cited only once and 5:13 by itself is never mentioned or developed.

Two factors are responsible for their misunderstanding: (a) they were too deeply influenced by an over-spiritual disdain of created things, very likely part of their previous Catholic environment, (b) they absorbed too much of the material and ideas of the Apocrypha. The conclusion then is that the Hutterite plan of community reflects a naive interpretation of the scriptures which is not in accord with the New Testament plan for spreading the gospel. It was an anachronism in the time of the Reformation and remains one today.

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7. Monasticism was brought to the West in the fourth century.

### Implications for Riedeman's Interpretation.

The days of persecution for the Anabaptists are fortunately over, and it is hoped that the days of unfair and prejudiced scholarship are likewise ended.

In 1927, Franz Heimann wrote at the University of Vienna one of the very few dissertations on the Hutterites: Lehre von der Kirche und Gemeinschaft in der Hutterischen Taufergemeinde (The Hutterite Doctrines of Church and Common Life). It is regarded as an excellent descriptive work, but is entirely uncritical. The time is ripe for a new era in scholarship, both by Mennonites and by non-Mennonites. For years the Anabaptists were sensitive about persecution and they have not entirely gotten over three hundred and fifty years of biased writing about themselves from outside their camp. Only in the last few years has the Mennonite Quarterly Review included articles which have begun to look at the Mennonite-Anabaptist tradition of interpretation from a critical standpoint. This is a healthy sign because previously it had reflected a position which was only descriptive or "glorying in the past." This backward view showed many of the untenable positions and hermeneutical methods of Peter Riedeman. Perhaps now there will be less need for statements such as:

The Anabaptists seem to have been the only protestants in the sixteenth century who took a historical view of the Bible...<sup>10</sup>

With these things in mind, let us consider the implications of Riedeman's interpretation. Without any intention of being harsh or unfair, one may say that, taking his exegesis of I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1, together with the examination of the presuppositions (chapters four and five), Riedeman's interpretation is unsatisfactory. He repeatedly violates context, ignores the time setting of passages, takes certain verses and restricts their meaning too much, and gives to others a far wider meaning and interpretation than is warranted by grammatico-historical principles of interpretation. There are those who will say it is unfair to apply principles of present day biblical interpretation to a person who lived four hundred years earlier; still others

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8. Bainton, R. (N.4), page 206.

9. "critical" is to be understood in the modern sense, as "evaluative" and "investigative."

10. Klassen, Walter, "The Bern Debate of 1538: Christ the Center of Scripture," MQR 40:1966, page 152.

would object to his being placed beside so famous a person as Calvin whose commentaries of the Old and New Testaments laid the basis for all later scholarly exegesis in the Protestant Church. The conclusion that Riedeman's interpretation is unsatisfactory can be maintained simply by the fact that the four recurring faults are ones which even an untrained layman (or Riedeman) would not make were he reading a letter from a friend. Riedeman's mistakes are just not necessary; many of them do not involve complicated procedure. Riedeman could have been a much better interpreter if he had treated context and time as important and had not restricted and expanded the scripture so frequently. The tendency toward contextual errors can be considerably lessened if one has a good grasp of the material with which he is working. Riedeman's references in the Rechenschaft show that he had an excellent grasp of its content; <sup>11</sup>he is without excuse here. While a trained interpreter such as Calvin who had a good knowledge of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, history and the classics can make the most thorough investigation of a passage and come to adequate conclusions, a person relatively untrained in theology and humanistic studies can do a very reasonable job of interpretation if he is careful to observe context, time setting and observes how a verse is to be applied. We have thus evaluated Riedeman by the possibilities open to a person of his station and education.

The second implication or observation of what Riedeman has produced by his interpretation concerns his emphasis on ethics. Until now, we have been discussing specific details of his interpretation. In a broader sense, there is one major implication to be drawn from all his work; in chapter four, page 70, we said:

By placing ethical emphasis (which assumed it had the truth) before sound scholarship, the procedures by which the biblical message is arrived at were given a secondary role to the application of the truth. They were trying to apply in some cases truths they did not have in order to serve a God for whom they had too narrow a concept.

Throughout the Rechenschaft, Riedeman has sacrificed a great deal of understanding he could have obtained by more careful interpretation, in order to maintain the predominantly ethical emphasis. For him, everything is secondary to the pure church, discipline and the ethical life. Separation as presented by him is not only logical but necessary, if one agrees with his presuppositions.

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11. Riedeman was deficient in the relationship of the



The problem is essentially one of balance or perspective. Riedeman's horizon extends no further than ethics. Figuratively speaking, if the ground on which he stood were more substantial, his perspective would not be fastened (and lost) on one part of the total view.

There is a higher priority; the imperative to spread the gospel (Mt. 28) is subservient to understanding what is to be spread. The command to love and help one's neighbor is subservient to understanding (a) what God means by love (which is responsible, as well as gentle) and (b) just who is the neighbor. For all his words on love and the virtue of being "harmless," his sincere desire to fulfill Mt. 28, his presupposition on created things, the inherent character of government and an unwillingness to accept a person into fellowship who does not conform immediately to his high standards of behaviour betray an unrecognized contempt for the world and its inhabitants. Jesus' social intercourse with the adulterers, harlots, Samaritans, soldiers and tax-collectors would not be in accord with the ethical conduct required in the Rechenschaft. The famous "nachfolge Christi" would terminate at this point. There are elements of self-righteousness here.

In summary, a concern for the ethical alone does not assure that one shall find it. The best ethics do not come from presuppositions but from a correctly interpreted and understood source of ethics, the scriptures.

The Anabaptists of the sixteenth century continually criticised other Protestants because they made a profession of faith and failed to live up to it. They were correct in certain instances. The content of Riedeman's presuppositions indicates he made an error in the area of interpretation which was just as serious; it would affect a person's understanding of the Christian faith and the ethical life. We must not be satisfied to ask the question "which was worse?" for that would be a third error. Both are equally objectionable and a proper understanding of scripture in both camps would have gone a long way in preventing them. Christian ethics cannot be divorced from good interpretation.

#### Implications for Baptism

The controversy over baptism at the beginning of the Reformation was so sensitive an issue with the Anabaptists that they were in no frame of mind to consider the evidence which the Reformers, especially Zwingli

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content to itself.

and Calvin, presented.<sup>12</sup> As we survey four hundred years of controversy, in which the dust has not settled, it appears the Anabaptists advocated the right condition, separation of church and state, over the wrong practice, adult baptism, while the Reformers maintained the wrong condition, church-state unity, promoting it with the right practice, infant baptism. Had the Anabaptists not been so intransigent about the pure church, the Reformers might not have been so vicious in their persecution.

By refusing to take a more moderate course of action, it is likely the Anabaptists helped perpetuate the very thing they despised. Had they not insisted on a "pure church" at the immediate moment, they probably would have been able with their increasing numbers<sup>13</sup> and sympathy of the lower classes to prevail upon the state-church as it originated and have brought about a gradual and permanent reform as did Calvin in Geneva (see page 143). It is possible the, that they insured the permanent existence of the church-state when they might have, by a more patient and mature course of action, altered it permanently in thirty to fifty years.

All implications for the problem of baptism ultimately stem from the question of the relationship of the Old and New Testament. The important thing is to show where the burden of proof lies and in what direction the available evidence points.

There are indeed serious implications in what Jeremias calls "modern individualist thinking."<sup>14</sup> By this, he means the tendency to see the composition of the church as individuals primarily related to God and whose relationships to each other are of considerably less importance. That relationship which both the Old and New Testaments set forth does not stop with the two-way relationship of the Christian and God, but takes the form of a triangle and is of an organic nature. "For the body does not consist of one member, but of many..." (I Cor. 12:14-30).

The significance of what is called "corporate personality" and "family solidarity" in the thinking of the ancient world and the Bible is minimized by those committed to adult baptism. This is because their interpretation of the Old Testament is dominated by their concept that "the covenant of grace is a covenant recogni-

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12. It appears that Riedeman was familiar with the arguments for infant baptism only from a local level. The content of his explanation does not indicate a familiarity with the more comprehensive and exegetical works of Calvin and Zwingli.
  13. In the early part of the sixteenth century, the Anabaptists numbered in the tens of thousands in Germanic Europe.

tion and knowledge of God." This is "modern individualist thinking;" it sees the church made up of individuals who can "recognize and acknowledge God," and is a natural deduction from Riedeman's suppositions.

"We must," says Jeremias, "in particular keep before our eyes the fact that the family represented by the father of the household was in old times much more strongly experienced as a unity than to-day....In particular in its relation to God the household was a unity...it was normal for the ancient mind to regard the faith of the father as decisive."<sup>15</sup>

The concept of "created things" as evil, government being "outside the realm of Christ," the doctrine of the "two kingdoms" and a general tendency to overspiritualize would make it easier to stress beyond its proper biblical limits the position that each individual must be "born again" and settle his own relationship to God. Here, unfortunately, the Old Testament has not been allowed to speak for itself and shed its own light on the matter; it is rather an instance in which certain categories are forced upon the baptism problem. This conclusion is reasonable in the light of the findings in chapters three through six.

The requirements for baptism of "knowledge and recognition of God" are false requirements, coming in part from the idea that the people under the covenant in the Old Testament had no knowledge of God and that the Holy Spirit did no work at all in their lives. Corporate personality, family solidarity and the oikos formula are not presuppositions, myth or speculation. They are concrete realities arrived at through painstaking and sober scholarship.<sup>16</sup> They must be seriously re-

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14. Jeremias, J., Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, tr. D. Cairns, London, SCM Press, page 22.

15. Ibid.

16. The following sources are mentioned by Jeremias in regard to the concepts "corporate personality" and "family solidarity." A. Bentzen, King and Messiah, ET London, 1955, and by North, The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah, London, 1948. See also E. Percy, Der Leib Christi (Σώμα Χριστοῦ) in den paulinischen Homologumena und Antilegomena (Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, N.F. Avd. 1, 38:1), Lund und Leipzig, 1942. E. Menegoz, 'Le baptême des infants d'après les principes de la théologie paulinienne', Revue Chrétienne 31, 1884, page 236; H. Grossmann, Ein Ja zur Kindertaufe (Kirchliche Zeitfragen 13), Zürich, 1944, pp. 19-22; O. Cullmann,

ckoned with. Since they are well established and the idea of baptism being a "covenant of knowledge and recognition" is related to such questionable presuppositions, the burden of proof rests upon the antipaedobaptists to show that the child who was an integral part of the Hebrew family is in the New Testament "cast out" of the family as a non-member of the church.

William Klassen in his article, "Anabaptist Hermeneutics, the Letter and the Spirit" (MQR 40:1966, page 84), leads us to the final conclusion:

There is a certain urgency about the question of how Anabaptists used the Bible. The question would not be so urgent if Anabaptists found sources of authority outside the Bible. It is, however, extremely urgent for people who claim to base their total position upon biblical revelation. It is certainly conceivable that a group of people living four hundred years ago who approached the Bible earnestly could be shown to be wrong today on the very premises that meant the most to them....it is conceivable that we, their followers, might conclude that it really does not say what they thought it did. Obviously if their position cannot be defended upon the grounds of sober study and understanding of the text, if they were either too busy or too uneducated to give the Bible the kind of thorough study it deserves and arrived at their positions intuitively or charismatically, then a rejection of their position should be the first order of the day. No emotional attachment to them, or historical antiquarianism should detain us in this rejection, nor should anyone consider us irreverent iconoclasts for carrying the original Anabaptist premise to its logical conclusion.

Riedeman clearly used sources of authority outside the canon in the Apocrypha and in the concepts underlying several of his presuppositions. The commonly accepted idea that his "total position is based upon biblical revelation" is not true. While there is no doubt that Riedeman has engaged in a sober study of the scriptures, his failure to use the standard tools of interpretation available in his day has cost him much. He is wrong on the very premises that meant the most to him. Because he has used sources outside the canon, it is all the more urgent to investigate its implication.

We must reject Riedeman's presentation for the restriction of baptism to adults. There are two reasons

which make this necessary: (1) Riedeman's exegesis is so unsound and so governed by presuppositions and (2) there is a great weight of indirect evidence against him.

If the hermeneutics and presuppositions of other important Anabaptists of the sixteenth century are equally deficient, the case for the limitation of baptism to adults is indeed in jeopardy. It is the belief of the author that further investigation will confirm this.

Those of Baptist persuasion in the twentieth century must re-examine these historical roots very carefully in order to make certain they are not practicing the "end product" of a sixteenth century error while their own hermeneutical and philosophical principles may have changed from those of Riedeman. A practice should not be separated from its origin.

### Implications for Separation

The issues which cause separation usually revolve around (a) ecclesiastical discipline, (b) disagreement over practices such as baptism, (c) questions of doctrinal purity, (d) ethical conduct, or (e) the attitude toward the surrounding world. It cannot be said that these issues are confined to any one period in the church's history. They begin in the separation of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41) over a "sharp contention" in plans, are found in the schismatic Donatists of the African Church (fourth century) who held that the church must be holy and pure, and appear again in the Cathari (katharos, pure), a name applied to several sects, the most well known of which is one occurring in the twelfth century. We observe it in the Anabaptists of the Reformation (along with Luther, Calvin and Zwingli!). From the time of the development of Protestantism to the present, the opportunity for the occurrence of separatistic controversies have been more numerous because of the development of religious toleration, the wider access of the laity to the Bible and the existence of the "free church."

Looking at Riedeman's treatment of I Cor. 5:9-13 and II Cor. 6:14-7:1 in chapter three, one sees a kinship with the rigidity of doctrine in the early Donatists, and the desire for purity found in the Cathari. On this side of the Reformation, Riedeman's thought shows a resemblance to the Pietistic Movement of the seventeenth century to the fundamentalist and revivalist movements, with their stress on conversion and strong anti-intellectualism. One conclusion then, is that separatism is repeated over and over around these same issues, but in somewhat different forms.

Of the thirty times Riedeman makes reference to the two passages, fourteen are either misinterpreted or

present problems. He does not really understand the passage and his presupposition govern his thinking so heavily it is not possible for him to keep from misusing the passage.

If a comparison is made between Paul's reasons for separatism in chapter two and Riedeman's in chapter three, we find an entirely different basis. Eduard Schweizer remarks that "exaltation and glorification take place in the lowliness of obedience." In this frequently occurring thought, the New Testament shows itself to be very much opposed to "escape into a better world." "It is in the midst of the world that freedom from the world becomes a reality."<sup>17</sup>

On the basis of his treatment of the two Corinthian passages and the non-biblical thought behind it, Riedeman's reasons for separation must be completely rejected. Modern separatism, like that of the Anabaptists in the sixteenth century, is usually based upon invalid presuppositions, careless and imprecise exegesis, failure to pay attention to context, or "verse-ism,"<sup>18</sup> as it is called today. Contempt for learning is also a very important factor. Most separatism today could be avoided if the individuals and denominations involved would take a serious look at their interpretation and its philosophical basis, along with a re-examination of the biblical idea that obedience, quite apart from the "black and white," "no compromise" attitude of Peter Riedeman, often involves paradox, and that there is "freedom from the world" by being involved in the midst of the world. Finally, it is possible to live a paradox without compromise.

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17. Schweizer, Eduard, Lordship and Discipleship, Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 28, London, SCM Press, 1960, page 110.
  18. "Verse-ism," the tendency to regard each verse as a separate idea (and thus rob it of its context) is a particularly common occurrence in English speaking countries where the King James Version of the Bible is used. There are no paragraphs which would help the reader to see context; each verse is separately divided. The French Bible (L. Segond, 1910), the Zürcher Bible (Swiss, 1931) and the Luther Bible (1912) have paragraphs, thus preventing the problem. While the scripture claims inspiration for itself (II Tim. 3:16), it makes no claim on the way it is placed on a page or printed!

## APPENDIX

Implications for the Church  
in the Twentieth Century

The fact that the "left wing of the Reformation" was, for the most part, suppressed in Europe, caused it to be neglected by church historians who preoccupied themselves with their own churches. It is true in almost any field that knowledge of the opposite position will help one understand his own area better. Only recently have scholars realized this of the Radical Reformation. There is in fact much more of the thought and method of the Anabaptists in twentieth century protestantism than is realized. It is not necessary for our purposes to show a direct historical connection between the German Anabaptists, Dutch Mennonites and our present century, though if more information is subsequently brought to light it would be of great interest. An important connection is the coincidence of approach to the scriptures, interpretive method and ethical action. This similarity will show itself anywhere if the proper conditions exist. These conditions are generally religious dissension, the existence of a relatively low economic class and anti-intellectualism which can take the form of outright contempt for learning or the predominance of practical ideas (those which make money or produce results) over theoretical ones. Bainton says these spiritual descendents of the left wing "gained a permanent foothold and did even more than the established church to fashion the temper of England and America."<sup>1</sup>

When Calvinism came to England it spread through the Puritans, who in turn became dissenters against Anglican establishment (for different reasons though). Failing to overcome it, they moved to America and became the establishment in New England. At the same time in England, the forces of Millenarians, Baptists, Seekers, Ranters and Quakers began to disturb the old order "arguing for intuition and inspiration" against education and systematic doctrine. They wanted to introduce lay preachers; they made the typical charge that the professional clergy was "null and void, and without

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1. Bainton, Roland, Studies in the Reformation, Lon-

authority."<sup>2</sup>The qualities displayed here were to become those which would soon trouble the former Dissenters and establishment Puritans in America, and resembled continental Anabaptism. Large numbers of this group of economically and religiously disaffected (both from the Anglicans and Puritans) would form the religious character of America under the revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, after the breakdown of the Puritan influence in New England.

The similarities between the attitudes and methods of Riedeman and later protestantism carry important implications. In *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*, Richard Hofstadter of Columbia University says:<sup>3</sup>

Religion was the first arena for American intellectual life...and thus the first arena for an anti-intellectual impulse....The feeling that ideas should above all be made to work, the disdain for doctrine and for refinements in ideas, the subordination of men of ideas to men of emotional power or manipulative skill are hardly innovations of the twentieth century; they are inheritances from American Protestantism.

The first part of the statement describes Riedeman exactly; a slight distinction must be made concerning "men of emotional power and manipulative skill." It applies to Riedeman in so far as it describes a charismatic leader with administrative ability. In America, however, emotional outbursts elicited by such a leader were more developed and frequent.<sup>4</sup> The phrase "manipulative skill" which Hofstadter uses refers to political manipulation with the congregation and denomination rather than administration only.

The attitude of the early revivalists in preaching and interpreting the Bible has parallels in Anabaptism. In 1743, Charles Chauncy of the liberal-minded Boston clergy described the revivalists' idea of a qualified ministry this way:

Men of all occupations...think themselves fit to be teachers of others; men who though they have no

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don, Hodder and Stoughton, 1964, page 129.

2. Hofstadter, Richard, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*, New York, Random House, 1962, page 55.

3. Ibid.

4. Only in the excesses of Münster and St. Gallen did the Anabaptists engage in "emotion" to any great extent. Riedeman is technically an enthusiast, but is much more subdued (see page 8, N. 14 also).



learning...imagine they are able, and without study too, to speak...to such as are willing to hear them.<sup>5</sup>

Hofstadter's description shows the contrast and completes the picture:

To the exponent of a religion of the book for whom a correct reading of the Bible was a vital concern, this was the ultimate heresy; that one who was possessed of the Spirit could, without study and without learning interpret the word of God...whether it was more important to get a historically correct and rational understanding of the book - and hence the word of God - or to work up a proper emotion, a proper sense of inner conviction and of relation to God.<sup>6</sup>

Here is similarity in attitude; the Spirit is the final interpreter and learning is not necessary. The interpretation of the Bible was an individual matter. The common view was that when there was a matter which needed to be settled that "every individual could reach for his Bible and reject scholarship."<sup>7</sup> The "proper sense of inner conviction and relation to God" is parallel to Riedeman's interpretation of I Pet. 3:21, "an appeal for a good conscience toward God."

In the concept of the church, there was a similarity with the Anabaptists. Since the layman in this new society was free to choose his denomination, he usually selected one which reflected America's break with the past and journey toward something new; there was a look westward and therefore a mentality directed toward the future. Europe represented for the person in the new world a break with the past whose faults and mistakes must be improved upon. The American shared with the Anabaptist the view that much of the purity of early Christianity had been compromised. This purity must be recaptured and man in the new world was more free than the Anabaptists ever were. "The objective," says Hofstadter, "was to return to the primitive conditions of Christianity, to which scripture alone would give the key."<sup>8</sup> A primitive, pure church would mean one in which discipline would have to be practiced to keep it pure. This would

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5. Hofstadter (N. 2), pages 69-70. This is not a biased description on the part of Chauncy. The revivalists would say the same thing.

6. Ibid., page 70.

7. Ibid., page 57.

8. Ibid., page 83.

necessitate ethical requirements similar to the Anabaptists.

Because of time and space, there are numerous parallels which cannot be mentioned. A final one concerns the mission of the church as conceived in the new world with its large unchurched population.

The bond that held most denominations together need not be a...confessional bond, i.e., a historical system of doctrinal belief....the mission itself was defined by evangelism. The basic purpose...was that of gaining converts.<sup>9</sup>

Here also we find the Great Commission an important consideration.

There are some final implications. Ronald Knox tells us, "as Gnosticism is Christianity perverted by speculation, so Montanism is Christianity perverted by fear of learning and speculation."<sup>10</sup> No Christian should be forced to choose between a type of "Gnosticism" as opposed to a type of "Montanism." We have, as God's creatures, both a mind and a heart; we must use both and be afraid of neither. If we reject one for another, we are not whole men. The middle and right way is one of balance between the two; even though it will cost us some agony and hard thinking, we should not eschew it for another solution because it "seems" easier.

The entire work of Riedeman brings with it some serious implications against the untrained ministry. Impreciseness and contempt for sound and hard-won knowledge is inexcusable and is a form of pride.

In his interpretation and attitude toward the Old and New Testament, Riedeman anticipates Dispensationalism to some degree. There is a large correspondence between Riedeman's pessimistic attitude toward the world and the church in this present day movement. They would do well to consider his interpretation in order to avoid his mistakes.

### Final Implications

Thus we have seen from the examples in the previous pages how parallel conditions have produced parallel results in the church at large. Because their basis of anti-intellectualism, disdain for history, "proof-text" and enthusiastic method of biblical interpretation, and emphasis on the Great Commission almost to the exclusion of sanctification in the life of the believer, has been

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9. Ibid., pages 83-84.

10. Knox, Ronald, Enthusiasm, Oxford, 1950, page 25.

the same, we must conclude that they are no more justified in these emphases than Riedeman was.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament
IDB	The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
ICR	J. Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion
ME	Mennonite Encyclopedia
MQR	Mennonite Quarterly Review
NT	The New Testament
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
ODCC	Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church
OT	The Old Testament
RSV	The Revised Standard Version of the Bible
TWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Robert Charles Holland was born 15 August 1932 in Spur, Texas, U.S.A., the son of Robert C. and Kathleen Holland (nee Lively). He received his education in the Public Schools in Childress, Texas. He then matriculated at the A & M College of Texas and pursued studies in English and Biology. After receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English in 1954 he did additional graduate work in Biology.

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At the completion of his studies in August 1967, he returned with his family to Fresno, California. In February of 1968 he was appointed lecturer in Biblical Studies at Pacific College, Fresno. In September 1968 he became Associate Professor in the Department of Biblical Studies at Pacific College. The Hollands have four children: Laura, born in 1962, Julie in 1963, Mark in Basel in 1965, and Jeffrey in 1967.

Mr. Holland is one of the group of former students at Basel who are grateful for the distinguished scholarship and graciousness of Professor Bo Reicke and his wife. He is also grateful to the Faculty of Theology at Basel who made his time there meaningful and pleasant.

This volume is gratefully dedicated to his wife, Esther and children.

